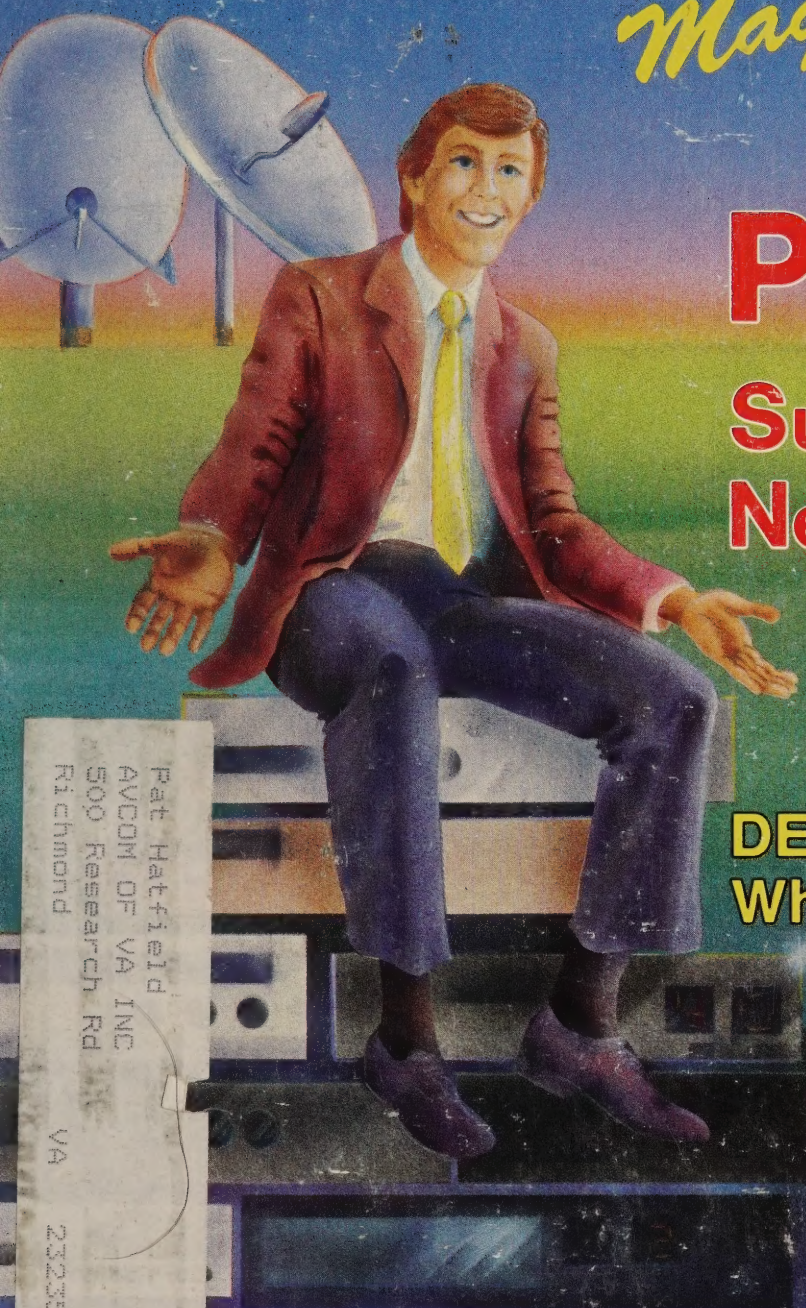
THE MARKETING TECHNIQUES MAGAZINE FOR SATELLITE TV PROFESSIONALS

SATELLITE TV OPPORTUNITIES *Magazine*

February 1986



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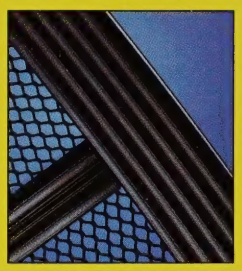

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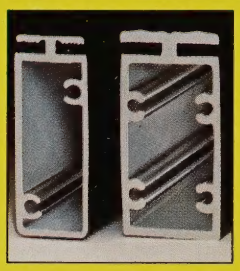

Four internal reinforcing channels while other antennas have only one or two.

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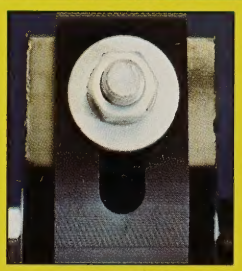

Deep extruded ridges on *both* gripper panels.

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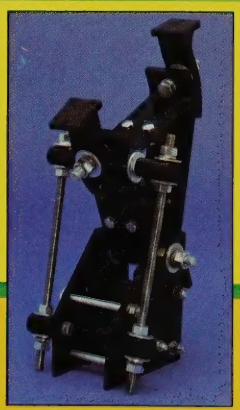

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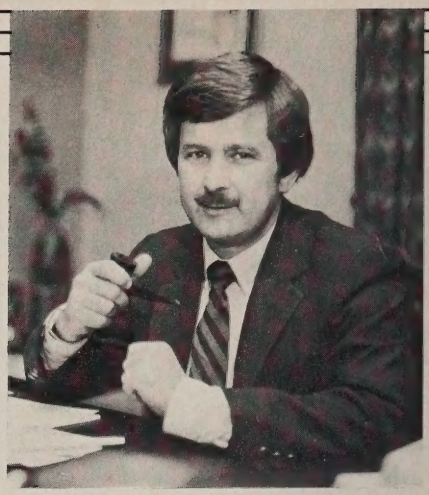


Dr. Ed Meek

Satellite Opportunities Expo Offers New World Of Opportunity

Opportunities Publishing, Inc., is pleased to announce the Satellite Opportunities Expo to be held at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville on April 6-8. This is not just another trade show, but a show and conference which we think offers a world of opportunity.

The Satellite Opportunities Expo for Home and Business is the first trade show and conference which brings together home entertainment and business applications for satellite technology.

Sponsored by *Satellite TV Opportunites Magazine, Ku-band World Magazine* and The University of Mississippi's Center For Telecommunications, the Expo is designed to expand the business opportunities of C-band TVRO dealers, distributors and manufacturers as the Ku-band market develops and introduce our readers to new marketing opportunities in both Ku and C-band applications.

Keynoter Larry Speakes

This show will mark the first time that a White House official has addressed our industry. Larry Speakes, Assistant to the President and Press Secretary to President Ronald Reagan, will be the keynote speaker at the opening session. Other national leaders such as Eddie Fritz, president of the National Association of Broadcasters, will address attendees.

Co-sponsorship of the Expo by a major university marks another milestone in the development of our industry. Other major industry corporations, both in the C and Ku-band marketplace, will be announced also as sponsors.

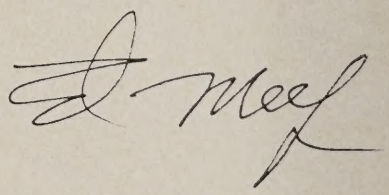
A primary goal of the Expo and conference is to provide participants with information on new opportunities both developing and existing in the satellite marketplace. April, we think, will be turn-around time for TVRO and this show will be a part of that turn-around with increased sales and expanded markets.

No one denies Ku is going to be big business. Already it is a large market in business applications and home entertainment is moving in at a rapid pace. We want you to share in these opportunities, and through the Expo we will provide you the vehicle.

Growing Interest

As we conducted our research in establishing *Ku-band World,* we found a growing interest in TVRO. Major players in the satellite business services sector are eager to get to know the C-band distribution network, which is finding a growing role in the business market. As Ku develops, there will be a merger of C-band and Ku-band groups and the opportunities in both the business applications and home entertainment markets will be shared by what might be called "high tech" players and the C-band manufacturing and distribution network. We want to be a part of this growth and we want you to share in what we see as a new world of opportunity both in C-band and Ku-band.

Make your plans now to be in Nashville for the Satellite Opportunities Expo. Forms for pre-registration and exhibitors are provided on page 103.



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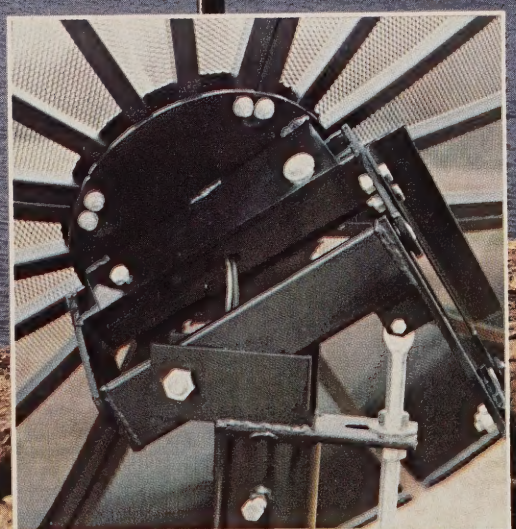

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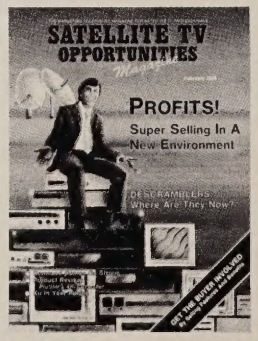
On The Cover

Scrambling? Decoders? Ku band? Dual feeds? These are a few of the topics on the minds of dealers these days, and among them is one that is most important—profits. Staying in business in today's market requires quick adaptation to change, and it seems the more changes that come, the more there is to sell. Staying on top of it all will require real professionalism.



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Staying Afloat

By Jim Gray

Remember the late actor Peter Finch in the movie *Network?* Playing the role of a disheartened and fed-up TV anchorman, he urged his viewers to vent their frustrations by shouting, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take this anymore!"

No doubt there are some TVRO dealers who feel the same way.

Most dealers around the country are feeling the weight of cable's campaign to weaken or even eliminate the competition from home satellite television, and many are making angry noises. While 1985 was predicted to be a prosperous year, some educated guesses place sales totals at 25 to 30 percent below projections. And as some of the major programmers continue a relentless march toward scrambling — at

the same time extensively advertising the fact to the buying public — it's no wonder that consumers are holding back until the waters clear.

TVRO dealers, meanwhile, are confronted with the task of staying afloat during the period of transition.

The thing to remember is that the period is transitory, but dealers are going to have to sharpen their skills to weather it. Like any storm it can be ridden out. The whole concept of scrambling may become such an unworkable, Rube Goldberg contraption that it will collapse of its own weight, or else legislation — and several bills addressing the various issues have been introduced in the Congress — will finally result in fair and equitable treatment for all.

Some dealers are sailing in troubled waters, but there's the promise of fair weather ahead. The trick is to develop the skills to ride out the storm.

There are more than a million households with TVRO already in place who will not be ignored, and millions of others who receive short shrift in TV programming will not be denied. Cable will never be able to fill the demand, but satellite television can.

In a word, the market is alive and well. But for satellite television dealers, the question becomes how to convince that market that the time to buy is now.

That's a concern of distributors and manufacturers around the country who sense the new selling environment that scrambling and other issues have produced. For example, the Clifton Park, NY distributor, National Satellite Communications, is providing educational materials to dealers with suggestions for handling consumer questions on scrambling and other concerns.

In the material sent to its dealers, NSC sketches the background of the cable/TVRO controversy, gives a quick synopsis of the pending legislation affecting access rights and fair pricing for home dish owners, and includes a copy of the remarks made on Earth Station Day in Washington by Representative Tim Wirth, a principle author of the legislation that helped legalize the TVRO industry. There is even a copy of a note of support from President Reagan. NSC's dealers are urged to use the materials as documentation to back up their statements to prospective buyers.

The information was sent to NSC dealers over the signature of Ronald E. Bruce, the company's director of finance/marketing. Bruce's letter concludes by saying, "When speaking to potential customers, always remember that the word 'scrambling' is by its nature a negative word. The common conception of the word stems from a wartime atmosphere whereby communications between armies are scrambled in order to prevent the enemy from intercepting sensitive communications. Point out to the consumer that we are not engaged in a war and consumers are not the enemies of programmers. In an expanding market such as ours, buyers and sellers of programming are destined to do business in both a fair and equitable manner as sure as day follows night."

Another major distributor SatcoUSA, New Philadelphia, Ohio, has also provided its dealers with information to answer consumers' scrambling concerns and is placing ads in 13 major newspapers in Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, its prime marketing area.

Tim Casper, SatcoUSA's director of marketing, says cable's ads have definitely been a detriment to their business, and his company's mail-outs to dealers and the newspaper ads are part of their ongoing effort to counter the misinformation.

"It's very hard to untell a rumor," Casper said. "I know of one woman who was unhappy with her cable service. She called them and said she was going to put in a satellite system. They told her to go ahead, that they would merely come in and take it out because they were illegal. That's the kind of thing we're facing."

SatcoUSA's and NSC's campaigns are aimed at dispelling untruths and placing emphasis on the positives about home satellite sales, and there are plenty of positives to emphasize. A satellite system offers the buyer much more than the opportunity to see

HBO at an inflated price. He has that option if he chooses it, but he also has other choices — plenty of them.

First and probably foremost, there's the unscrambled programming — dozens of channels that broadcast in the clear and will continue to do so. There is probably no better selling tool than an up-to-date program guide for both C-band and Ku-band. Pointing out the wealth of unscrambled programming to a customer may so lessen the impact of scrambling that it is no longer a real factor in the buying decision. The programming is there. Satellite television offers a whole new world that is simply waiting to be discovered. All that's needed is the equipment.

There is probably enough programming available right now to satisfy the heartiest appetite, but what lies ahead?

For one thing, there's Ku-band, and that's saying a lot. Scheduled launchings of Ku satellites outnumber C-band about five to one, so a dealer needs to know and sell the potential Ku offers. Selling equipment that is compatible to both bands gives a dealer much more to talk about to the buyer, but that talk has to be grounded in knowledge.

That's where dealer education comes in, even if it has to be self-education. In today's sales environment, the professional dealer takes advantage of every opportunity to learn about his business. As Ku-band becomes a major factor in the marketplace, knowing what it offers for the home viewer, understanding the equipment, and being able to recommend system packages that meet the needs of the buyer are three essentials in making the sale.

That means a dealer must take a disciplined approach to learning—on an ongoing basis. It's a high-tech, fast paced and rapidly changing business, and there is plenty of information available — but a dealer should never wait for that information to come to him. He has to seek it from his colleagues in the business, in technical manuals and trade journals, newsletters and spec sheets, sales training classes and correspondence courses. Perhaps in no other business must a retailer learn to be both engineer and salesman to the extent a satellite dealer must.

That's a major point, and for some, a major stumbling block. Sales and engineering don't always go hand in glove. As an engineer, a dealer must face the problems of site selection and installation. He has to solve the technical requirements, and so his mind centers on the "system" — the hardware and the headaches that sometime accompany it.

In a changing and hostile sales environment, dealers around the country have been pushed to the wall by a strong contingent of anti-TVRO forces. But with or without scrambling, home satellite systems offer consumers a whole new world to discover.

On the other hand, the dealer as a salesman is not selling a *system.* He is actually selling entertainment and information from a menu of information and entertainment that is growing almost daily. He must deal with a buyer in terms the buyer understands.

What can you, as a dealer, say to a customer who comes into your place of business and voices a concern over scrambling? You simply tell it like it is — the unvarnished truth. Who is scrambling? HBO, Cinemax, The Movie Channel, ESPN, CNN, Showtime and a few others — and if a customer wants to purchase a decoder and pay the fees to view those programs he can do so. But there is entertainment galore available to him that requires no descrambler, and that should be a major emphasis of your presentation.

If the buyer wishes to purchase a descrambler, he may be able to buy from you or another source. To a reputable dealer, where he makes a descrambler purchase is irrelevant. A dealer is not in the business of selling descramblers, although he may choose to do so as a service to his customers. His profession — and his profits — lie in the sale of systems that provide his customers more entertainment and information than they ever thought possible.

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even if for some it is only a part time profession. Some dealers may still work in satellite TV as a sideline, but the numbers are diminishing for the simple reason that, to be successful, a dealer must devote the amount of time as well as physical and mental energy a highly technical business demands.

It demands professionalism, a term that encompasses much more than simply doing business. The professional makes every effort to influence what happens in his marketplace, and often this is something that can't be accomplished alone.

Satellite dealers today are engaged in a struggle against cable's organized and highly visible campaign for the hearts and minds of consumers. Obviously, the cable industry is feeling the pressure, too, but it has a 20-year head start in organized resistance to competitive pressures, and the individual dealer may be hard pressed to counter effectively.

That's where dealer organizations can make a dramatic impact. In many parts of the country, dealers are setting aside their competitive differences to organize their own campaigns of information in answer to cable's. Cable's strategy in some locations has been to plant seeds of doubt in the minds of consumers, predicting dark days ahead for the home system owner and if not outrightly saying that home systems are illegal, at least intimating it. Unless a dealer can mount a counter-campaign of his own, his business can suffer. But with the collective buying power of a dealer organization, dealers can launch counter-offensives to present TVRO's case to the buying public. Newspaper ads paid through the organization's funds, press releases submitted on the organization's letterhead, radio talk-show appearances by qualified spokesmen and mail-out campaigns are a few of the ways public information can be distributed.

The marketing environment today calls for a grass-roots campaign to get the information to the people who buy. While SPACE may pursue the industry's goals on the national level, direct organized action by groups of dealers in a local market may have more influence on sales than any other effort.

In many parts of the country, dealer organizations are forming to launch campaigns of their own to counter cable's public pronouncements.

For the satellite dealer, survival during all the confusion may involve nothing more than applying a few key sales principles, and for some these principles may simply be the ones used during earlier, more prosperous days and now are dormant. It's time to revive them:

1. Sell quality products. And sell them at a fair price. It's time for cut-throat competition in price to give way to the goodwill that ensues when products perform as advertised. That goodwill builds the image of the industry as a whole.

2. Sell the entertainment that satellite television provides. Scrambling is here, but its impact on sales can be diminished when the buyer knows his alternatives. Paid programming is only a part of the vast array available from the satellites. Dealers should know the programming, and compiling a list of unscrambled programming to hand out to potential buyers may sway someone who thinks the movie channels are the main attraction.

3. Know the products you are selling. Learn everything possible about the equipment and its function in the system, and be able to explain them in terms the buyer can understand.

4. Sell for the future. No matter what, satellite television is going to be here. Selling antennas and electronics that are Ku-band compatible will demonstrate to the buyer that satellite television has an unlimited future, and he will have the equipment to receive it.

5. Care about the customer. Demonstrating that you care about the buyers' needs and desires may strike him as a pleasant surprise. In many cases, that's something he never received from the local cable company.

6. Get involved. Join the local dealers' association, or if one doesn't exist, start one. There is strength — and buying power — in numbers. Dealers who pool their resources in an organized effort to counter the anti-TVRO publicity that has appeared lately will realize far more benefits than scattered efforts by individuals. And let your representatives in Washington know that you support the pending national legislation.

7. Keep a positive outlook. Your own confidence and enthusiasm is infectuous to a prospective buyer. Don't be trapped into feeling that you're in a contest with anti-TVRO forces that you can't win. Nothing is further from the truth.

What was it that prompted those million-plus TVRO owners to buy in the first place? Basically it was one of three things: their television reception was either poor or non-existant; they were unhappy with service from their cable company; or they saw an opportunity to invest in equipment they would eventually own outright that would give them all the programming free.

These were the primary motivations, and the last one doesn't fully apply any more. But the other two are just as valid as ever.

So sell home satellite systems and the entertainment and information they offer. If the buyer wants to view the scrambled programming, explain the fee structures and offer him a decoder. The monthly cost for the programming may turn him off, but if it does, you still have an alternative. . .

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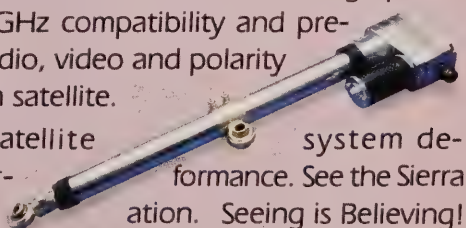

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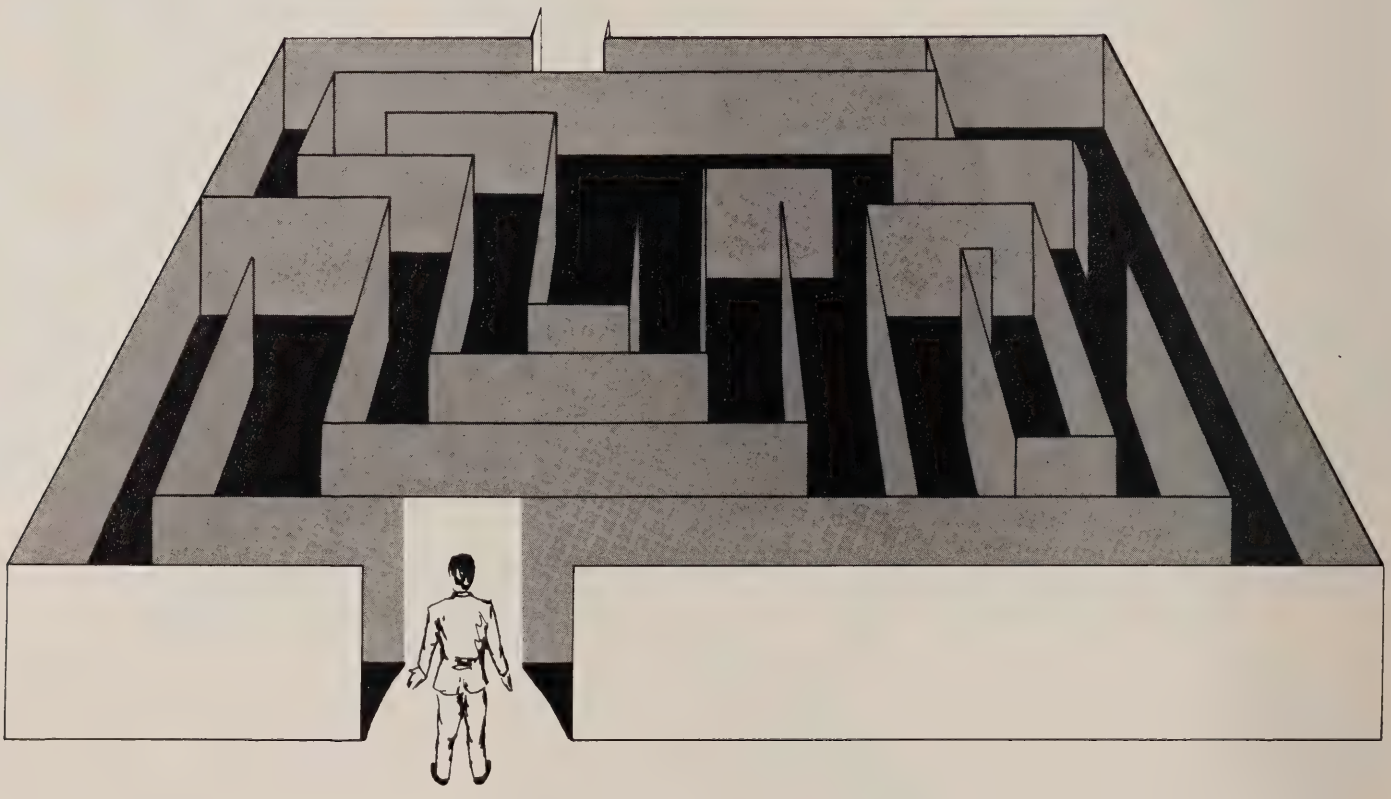

By William Gunn

Distributors and manufacturers have different opinions as to whether the demand for decoders will be significant. Some say the demand will be immediate and substantial, while others maintain it is contigent on the number of programmers who scramble in the future.

With his holiday sales falling somewhat behind the usual pace, Bill Hardy was in a dilemma.

Sure since the much-feared scrambling phantom had taken a definite form and was looming over the new year-horizon, Hardy expected at least temporary hard times. He knew they were coming and he saw his one salvation. Hardy's thoughts, which probably echo those of thousands of dealers around the country, were to obtain Videocipher II descramblers so he could prepare himself to meet the inevitable run of past customers who would be wondering what happened to their HBO.

Hardy knew what to do, what he didn't know was *how* to do it.

And when Hardy went searching for the information he hoped would lead him to a purchase, he ran into a brick wall — head on. No one, it seemed, knew anything. "They're going to scramble for sure by January 15," Hardy said. "I'll have my customers asking me how they can buy descramblers, and I won't know what to tell them because I can't find anything out myself. I'm at a loss. I've tried to search for the truth in this situation, and so far, I haven't made any sense of it whatsoever. It's the most confusing, chaotic situation I've ever been associated with."

Hardy was in more than a dilemma, he was near a state of emergency. This wasn't the way he ran things. Hartron Satellite Supply in Greenwood, Miss., was one of the oldest and most successful dealerships in Mississippi. He had made it that way by staying on top of matters. This was a new situation entirely.

He spent several fruitless days on the telephone tracking down leads. He called Cinemax — they could tell him nothing but referred him to M/A-Com who they have contracted with to use the technology for the Videocipher II. M/A-Com told Hardy they would be selling in quantity to the cable operators. Hardy's local cable operator didn't have or know anything about receiving descramblers.

Runarounds like that are enough to make a respectable dealer howl. Here he is, finally resigned to the inevitability of scrambling. The descrambler, once maligned, is now the light at the end of the tunnel . . . if he could only reach that light.

Finally, Hardy called a M/A-Com distributor. "I talked to Echosphere, and they're a M/A-Com distributor. They didn't know anything about it either. They don't know anything except they're of the same opinion that I am, they don't know what will happen or when."

But Charlie Ergen, president, said Echosphere will have limited quantities of the Videocipher prior to January 15. "We are a M/A-Com distributor of descramblers and we have been testing a unit for the last three weeks and it has met and gone beyond our expectations."

Ergen said Echosphere has been receiving daily requests at all of its locations for information concerning the decoder. "We probably get five or ten calls calls at each of our five locations every day. We are currently running tests with the receivers that we sell to see if it is compatible. They have a unit that's going to be 70 MHz. We haven't received a sample yet, but it should work with virtually all receivers. So, I don't think receiver compatibility will be a problem at all."

Ergen said he believes it will be the job of both the manufacturer and the ditributor to educate the dealer. The results of the tests will be released in a newsletter Echosphere distributes to all of its dealers. "We'll be printing our test results in the Echo letter and I think we will probably be running some seminars and sending out some mailings to educate the dealers in terms of what he needs and what it costs and how it works."

According to Doug Lindquist, director of video marketing for M/A-Com the stumbling blocks to information are only temporary problems brought about by a time shortage which hasn't allowed the company an opportunity to use its regular information outlets.

"This (information shortage) is definitely one of the problems we have been having," Lindquist said. "We haven't been in the position to send out very much information because we weren't sure what our delivery schedules were going to be. So, we just told the distributors to get in their advance orders and we'd allocate the first shipments that come in, and we'll also be sending the packages with point of sale purchase material and manuals and everything else."

In the second week in December Lindquist stated the whole situation had become confusing because of some reorganization concerning both literature associated with the Videocipher II and with the M/A-Com distribution channels. "I've heard about this problem from other people and it's certainly not something we want to go on for very long. People are saying they're starting to get orders or inquiries from customers, and they don't know where to go to get it (the descrambler). We're just starting at the beginning of the pipelines now and it hasn't filtered down to the retail level yet. Some distributors know more than

others, and we've just renogotiated with some distributors. We've dropped some and added some new ones. So, we're going through a little bit of reorganization, but within two weeks, those things shouldn't happen anymore. All of our distributors will not only have their information, they'll all be starting to get their inventory."

Lindquist said the installation manual for the Videocipher II had undergone some recent changes thus delaying shipments even further. "We just did a field test to see how well the installation manual worked — to see how well people would understand it. As a result of that, we've made some changes and re-arranged some pages in the manual. We want to make sure we give the answers in an understandable language so people will know what to do. I think the people at M/A-Com have been just been holding off day by day and saying 'let's not contact these people until we have a whole package to give them instead of little drips and drops."

M/A-Com has dedicated itself to having as many descramblers in the distribution pipeline as possible by January 15, the date HBO and Cinemax begin scrambling. But just what the distribution channels will be seems to be another matter dealers aren't informed on. Will they talk to the distributor, local cable operator or M/A-Com?

According to Lindquist, M/A-Com is distributing the Videocipher II through two channels — M/A-Com distributors and cable operators. In addition, M/A-Com will also sell the descrambler to Channel Master under a private label.

"We're doing it this way to get as many descramblers in as many hands as possible. We have promised the industry we will try to make this as wide a distribution of product as possible and so we're not restricting it just to our own M/A-Com authorized distribution method. We're saying our own 38 to 40 distributors and four to five thousand dealers will have the

(Continued on page 58)

So How Do You Sell A Decoder?

By William Gunn

The best way to sell decoders and other TVRO equipment these days is by burying the objection of scrambling right off the bat. New manuals and an increased flow of information should help dealers conquer the obstacles.

There's a strange new world out there . . . and TVRO dealers can learn not only to live and sell in it, but to make a profit as well.

Along about January 15, TVRO dealers must have felt about as secure in the satellite industry as a tightrope walker in high wind. But that need not be the case say many marketers who are doing their best to come up with "how to" formulas which will enable dealers to sell descramblers and TVRO equipment to what may be a wary public.

According to Donald Berg, vice president of Channel Master which began marketing M/A-Com's Videocipher II under its own name, several diverse special interests groups will have come into agreement before efforts to market descramblers will have any real effect.

"There are three parties to look at," Berg said. "You've got the cable operators, the movie industry and the programmers, and each has its own very special interests. They each feel very strongly about their own special reasons for maintaining control over the distribution of movies. The movie industry made them, the cable operators feel they should have exclusive distribution and HBO and Showtime and the other programmers now feel they have it already. So in my view, with the divergent interests that each has, they've got to kind of sublimate to get into one channel agreement as to how this is all going to come down. We've all got to work in some type of a cooperative fashion so that we have an efficient and effective marketing of the decoders and the programming."

But whether these factions come to terms is not the question in most dealers' minds. No, the nagging puzzlement at the tip of almost everyone's thoughts these days is "How in the world do you sell a descrambler?" Or as one retailer put it, how do you sell more TVRO to a customer who already feels he's been stung once?

Don Doney, vice president of sales and marketing for Satellite Video Services in Catskill, N.Y., explained the first step in making the descrambler a salable item is through education. "I think the biggest problem with scrambling and decoders is that dealers and consumers don't have the answers they need in order to continue to successfully sell

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TVRO systems."

Education and well informed dealers, Doney said, will be a vital step in continuing a relationship of trust between the retailer and the consumer. In order to make a sale of course, a customer must have complete faith in a dealer and the one important way to establish that confidence is to be completely knowledgable on the inevitable questions consumers will ask.

"You go to make a sale and you call someone on the phone or bring them in to your showroom and they immediately say, 'Well, what about scrambling?' And if you're not prepared, if you don't have a reasonable answer or some facts to give them, then not only is the issue a problem, but they also think, 'Well, what else is there that this guy isn't telling me about? What else doesn't he know about? Maybe I shouldn't buy a system or a descrambler from him if he really doesn't know much about the business in the first place.' "

But according to many of the people we spoke with, most of that vital information isn't easy to obtain. It may be that in the head-on rush to have decoders in mass production and waiting in the distribution wings by the 15th, something went amiss; namely, someone forgot to tell the dealers how to sell them.

Doney said the situation for the dealer is critical. "There's no question about how bad the problem is for the dealer. The information has to trickle down and that takes time. Also, some distributors aren't as close to their dealers as we are, they may have a good relationship with them, but it's not like a dealer calls up and talks to the same representative every day. So, there's a little bit of an information gap right there.

"The situation is desperate for them because they just don't know. They don't have any information and it hasn't been advertised so how are they going to get it? Through us and it just takes time."

Like other distributors, Doney said SVS was in the process of putting together an information manual designed to aid the dealer with commonly asked questions. M/A-Com and Channel Master are also compiling information suppliments.

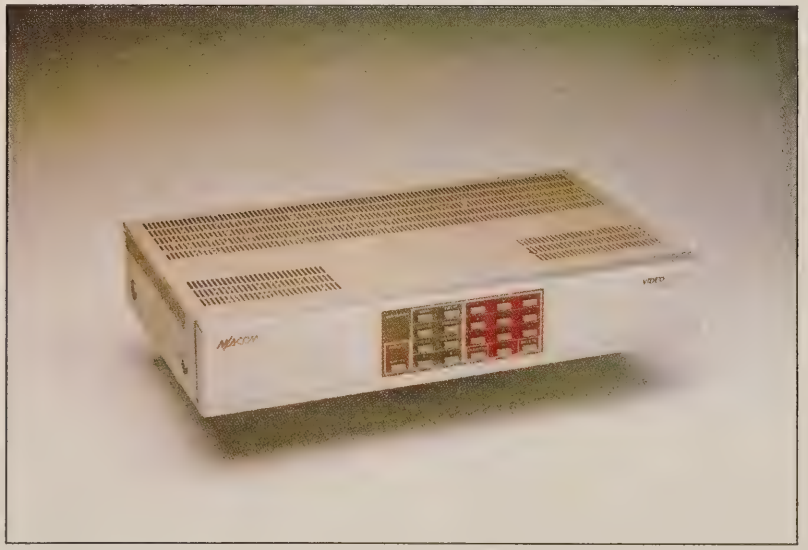
So just exactly how do you sell a descrambler? People have different opinions. Doug Lindquist, director of video marketing at M/A-Com, believes descramblers won't require a great deal of selling, they will sell themselves in what Lindquist refers to as a pull through marketing. "If you've got the inventory, it's going to move, in other words, the dealer won't have to go out and push these or do a whole lot of selling."

But Doney believes selling decoders will take a bit more persuasion, that TVRO customers both past and future will have objections to buying more TVRO equipment — even descramblers. "We're telling our dealers right up front — bury the objections of your customers by knowing how to talk with them. If a dealer can talk intelligently to his customers and bury the objection of scrambling right up front, then it is no longer a major stumbling block in the sale."

Another key to the sale of decoders will be in the success of the efforts of a number of cable companies and programmers who are trying to put their heads together in order to put together programming packages which would include 10 or 12 channels for $20 to $25 per month. "If that comes about," Doney said, "then I think $25 is a reasonable rate to pay per month for some of these premium channels, and as long as the Videocipher II unit is the bench mark, and everybody uses that as a standard, everything will be okay."

Berg, who is forecasting a 50 percent increase in the sale of home satellite equipment by the fall of next year if scrambling issues are settled, agrees. "Just recently we've seen some of the cable operators mention they are going to price the programming to backyard owners very competitively — at the same price as cable subscribers or even less, and that is a very good sign. The early indications are that this is going to be marketed very competitively and that's going

(Continued on page 36)



M/A-Com's Videocipher II

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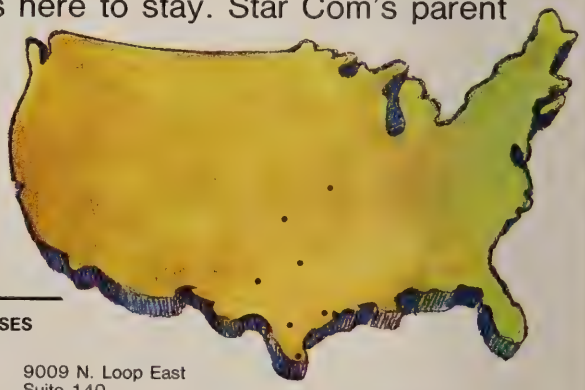

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Sound Replaces Sight For Pennsylvania Dealer

By William Gunn

Dave Reighard works in a world he's never seen.

Almost every morning he opens the shop which connects with his Hollidaysburg, Pa., home and goes about the daily business of running his satellite dealership. On other mornings he takes a ride on his motorcycle, or goes hunting, or works on repairing various electronical appliances.

If none of this seems unusual to you, consider the fact that Dave Reighard is blind.

"I've always really been lucky because anything that I've set out to do, within reason, I've found I could accomplish," Reighard said. "If I stick with something long enough, something's going to happen."

Reighard's indomitable spirit stems back to his childhood. He had a strong family life and parents, he said, who stood behind him one-hundred percent. "They just always stood behind me, and they let me find out what my own limitations would be — and it didn't take long to find that out."

Reighard also grew up in the small town of Martinsburg (population 10,000) and, as you might guess, there was nothing there to keep a visually handicapped young man entertained. So, Reighard chose the alternative — he ignored his handicap.

"If I wanted to fit in with the crowd, I either did what they did or I sat home and twittled my thumbs," Reighard remembered. "If they wanted to go out and drive automobiles, I went out and drove automobiles — otherwise, I was an outcast."

Early Interests

In order to learn braille, Reighard enrolled in the Western Pennsylvania School for the Blind in Pittsburgh. During the time he was there and throughout his early years, he was also cultivating an intense interest in electronics.

"I was interested in anything that had to do with electronics. So, when I graduated from high school I had a job in radio broadcasting," he said. "I kept that up for a while and did some broadcast engineer work at the station, too."

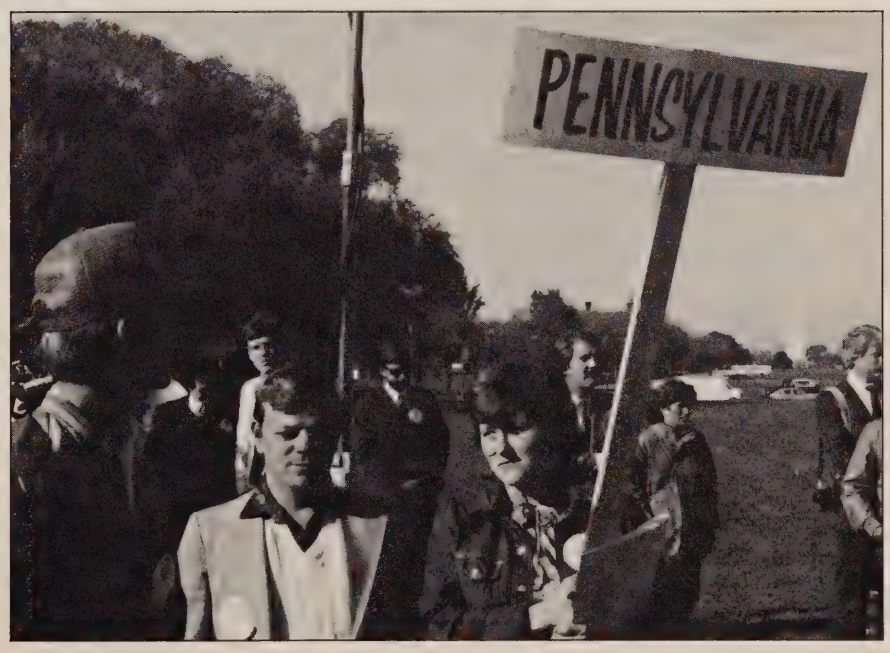
And it was the interest in electronics that eventually led him to satellite television.

"In radio broadcasting you see all kinds of technology. Of course, there was a lot of talk about using satellites for communications and that type of thing," he said. "I was always interested in a way you could get a signal across the United States without any interference in the process, and the satellites seemed to be the way to do it. So, when the first dishes became available to the public, we were already interested in it."

In 1980 Reighard remodeled his home electronics store into a home satellite dealership. Reighard said he remembers the early days well, his first system sold for $7,295.00. Although not many people knew what satellite stations or their purposes were back then, Reighard said those neophyte days were profitable. "When you sold one system back then, you had really done something. At that time mark-ups were fantastic. Most people didn't really know what they were, but the people who did were willing to pay any price to get one."

Like many Americans, owning a business has been a life long dream for Reighard. And while having a handicap has been a special obstacle he's had to overcome in order to achieve, it may have also put him a step above most TVRO dealers. "Having a handicap causes some people to question my capabilities. I really have to be on my toes to prove to the public that my work is as good or better than the guy beside me who has no problem. But it's the guy who doesn't have any problem who really has the handicap because he doesn't understand when somebody does have a handicap, he is more cautious about the work he does. He pays more attention to what he does, and nine times out of ten, he'll come out ahead."

Of course, working harder than the competition is one thing, but



Reighard (center) attends Earth Station Day in Washington.

Since losing his sight 25 years ago, Dave Reighard has sharpened and developed his other senses. He depends on his hearing and common sense to construct, install and repair satellite systems for D & W Sales, his dealership.

customer perceptions are quite another. The truth is, despite parallel accomplishments between the handicapped and the non-impaired in nearly every field of business, the public often casts a wary eye toward the physically disabled. "We've been real lucky because most people who come in here never question us. They might be curious as to *how* I do it, but it doesn't seem to interfere with sales. They don't say anymore, 'you can't do this job because you have a visual problem.' I install dishes myself. My customers are my proof. They're satisfied."

Reighard installs his own systems? He certainly does. Although he has a crew of installers (which includes his wife) to depend on, Reighard modestly said he is more than capable of installing . . . and sighting systems for his customers. "When we go out on an installation, anybody who can turn a nut and bolt can do a good job if they want to do it badly enough. It really doesn't take sight to put a dish together as long as you are familiar with the assembled parts to begin with — your memory takes over."

Sophisticated test equipment designed to make the job of sighting an antenna easier for the installer is of no use to Reighard — he can't read them, and he said he doesn't need them anyway. "When we aim a system, we have tweekers and test equipment like that, but in my particular case, these things don't do me much good. I depend on my ears to get as good a picture on a system as I can, and it works very, very well."

It works so well that Reighard said he's compared the job he does with his ears against the performance of other test equipment. An experiment was run using a sub-carrier which has no audio, only a quiet carrier. Reighard tuned the antenna until all of the static had disappeared from the picture . . . down to the last little sparkle. "I can compare that with any tweeker and be right on the nose every time."

Reighard said he developed his keen sense of hearing in response to the complete loss of his sight in 1960. When one of the senses is destroyed, the others become more highly developed. Reighard's hearing allows him to function without the use of seeing eye dogs or canes. "People who are normal take things for granted. You wake up, you reach for a pair of shoes and they're right there, and at the same time you don't realize there are 20,000 birds outside tweeting because you don't pay attention. But when you lose your sight all of the sudden, you have to start developing what senses you have. Regardless of which one you lose, you start paying more attention to the others. When I lost my eyesight, my ears became my eyes."

Another Sense

In order to do repair work on systems, Reighard depends on another sense — his sense of memory. Repairing systems, he said, is comparable to any other type of work — once you learn the ropes, you know what you have to do. "When I go out to repair a system, I find that they're all basically similar if you use a little bit of common sense. When I take a receiver apart to find out what the problem is, I know what the basic circuits are supposed to do which makes it easier to find the problem. I can build a visual picture in my mind of where a part is, and I can put my hand down on the circuit board and find that part."

The acute sense of hearing Reighard has acquired has also served to help him develop another skill — driving. D & W Sales repairs all types of small engines including mopeds and motorcycles. Reighard reasoned he needed to be able to ride the cycles in order to make sure he repaired them correctly — so he developed a system based on sound which allows him to drive.

"I ride basically by sound. Sound bounces off in different directions. If I'm on the road, the sound of the engine makes a different noise on the black top. I also have landmarks, the sound when I pass a tree bounces off of that tree and comes back to me. It works very well. It's all sound and concentration."

Although Reighard doesn't usually ride in high traffic areas (he cannot obtain a driver's license), he said his training at the Western Pennsylvania School for the Blind has prepared him for the times he does venture into high areas of traffic. "In school we had mobility training, and they train you to listen to the traffic and which way the traffic is travelling. If cars are going across an intersection, I know I had better stop.

Reighard can also hunt game using his hearing, and his abilities have paid off well. "I have gone hunting and killed a couple of rabbits and squirrels by sound. I made a bet with a fellow that I could blow a chipmunk out of a tree because I could hear where the animal was. It was a pretty expensive bet, I think about three hundred dollars. I aimed in the direction of the noise, pulled the trigger, and the chipmunk fell out of the tree."

With all of his accomplishments, Reighard has made there is still one goal he hasn't been able to reach — but it has nothing to do with his handicap. "My goal is to have a business that is strong enough to employ people with problems like I have and to give those people opportunities they have never had before. I want to let them know somebody cares. Everybody deserves a chance to prove what they can do, and I don't care what handicap you have, you also have a talent.

Given Reighard's past successes, you have to believe his dream will come true in the near future. As he says, "it's the same old story, if you set your mind to something, you can do it. My famous saying every since I was just a kid has been, 'I can do anything except see,' which means I can do everything."

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Training, Support Mark Kenwood's TVRO Entry

Car and home stereo, video equipment and shortwave have been Kenwood's mainstays since entering the consumer electronics field. Now with its Kensat system, the company is expanding into the growing marketplace of satellite television.

By Jim Gray

Kenwood.

For a tremendous number of electronics buffs, that's a name synonymous with amateur radio, mobile two way communications, car stereo and home audio and video. Kenwood's reputation for quality in the electronics marketplace — coupled with intelligent marketing — has given it a prominent place in the indsstry.

To thousands of consumers worldwide, there simply isn't any other brand, and it's on the strength of that kind of consumer loyalty that Kenwood intends to build sales of its Kensat satellite system.

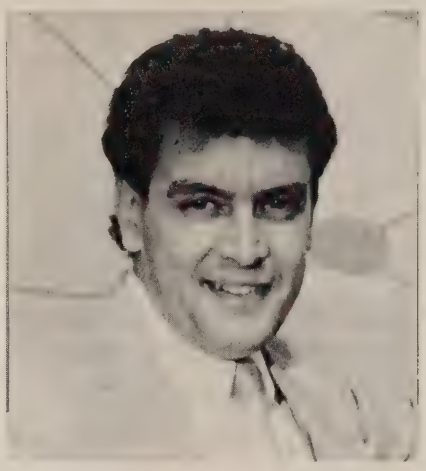
Kensat System

The Japanese company, which has been in business since 1946 and employs 2,400 people, is another corporate giant who sees the satellite industry as a promising profit center and has put forth a major effort toward the high end market. Its Kensat system is comprised of the KSR 1000 stereo block downconversion receiver, the KSP-1000 antenna positioner, the KSA-900 actuator, and the LNB-1000 low noise block converter, all forming a fully computerized satellite receiver system. The Kensat's black cabinetry and blue fluorescent readouts match Kenwood's other home video and audio components, making it easy to assembly a complete and attractive home entertainment center.

"We put into the Kensat system the same quality and peformance built into all Kenwood products," said Dan Petersen, vice-president, sales and marketing, whose responsibilities cover not only TVRO, but car audio and home audio and video. Petersen is headquartered at Kenwood USA Corporation located at Carson, Calif., near Los Angeles.

"We introduced the products last spring," Petersen said, "and since then we've been working to build our dealer network. At this point we're pleased with the results, considering the uncertainty in the marketplace

Dan Petersen



Mike Spaise

over scrambling. You'd have to say thus far we're below our projections. But we have an excellent marketing program that includes advertising in industry trade journals as well as consumer publications like Popular Science. We're getting our message — and our products — to the marketplace."

Direct To Dealers

Getting the products to the marketplace for Kenwood means finding the right outlets. Kenwood's approach is to sell the Kensat system direct to dealers through manufacturer's representatives across the country, as it does all its products. But before becoming an authorized Kenwood dealer, retailers must meet certain criteria.

"We're not looking for somebody who is going to be a flash in the pan," said Mike Spaise, who was recently promoted from national sales training manager to Eastern Regional Sales Manager. "We don't want someone who is going to roll over quick numbers. . . try the satellite market and use Kenwood as an experiment. We are looking for dealers who can offer experienced installation, either doing it themselves or having a good situation with a subcontractor. We want someone who will take care of service calls if there are any, and somebody who is willing to work with multiple receiver systems as well. A lot of dealers out there are used to single conversion systems, but a great deal of the market calls for multiple receiver systems."

Attitude Commitment

Equating with TVRO experience in the list of dealer criteria is what Spaise describes as "attitude commitment."

"We wanted to establish a number of things by going dealer direct," he said, "but the two most important were, first, finding someone who would take care of supporting the Kenwood name within the community and, second, be name protective from out standpoint. In other words, we look for dealers we believe will be in business tomorrow. That's very important for us."

Dealers are subject to some close scrutiny before they can hang a Kenwood sign in the window. Kenwood does no COD or cash in advance sales, so a dealer has to have a solid financial standing and pass muster with Kenwood's credit department.

"But basically that (financial status) is the last thing we look at," Spaise continued. "The first thing we look at is how well they represent satellite TV in the area they're in, and second, how well they can promote our product."

Dealers' promotion of the product is made easier through Kenwood's dealer support program. Once a dealer is chosen, he is given all the tools necessary to be successful in selling the Kenwood satellite products. Point of purchase display material such as banners, lighted signs, posters and window stickers are part of Kenwood's dealer support package. Other print materials, brochures and ad slicks are included as well.

"We can't control the prices any of the products are sold at," Spaise said, "but we can control the distribution within markets and give them training and sales support through a national sales training manager."

National sales training manager was Spaise's title before taking the Eastern regional manager's position. Robert "Skip" Whelan has assumed the training manager's duties.

"Skip's main function is to deal with the sales people all over the country who sell Kenwood satellite TV products," Spaise said. "He's been around satellite TV for a decade or so, mainly in installation, SMATV and commercial type work, so he's very valuable to us. He works with the reps in the field and hits the dealers within the area and gives them sales ammunition, such as a training seminar. He's there to educate everybody."

Manufacturers' Reps

Educating everybody includes Kenwood's manufacturers' representatives themselves. Across the country, 17 firms represent the Kenwood products, each with sales reps calling on Kenwood dealers. For them, selling the Kensat system required making a transition to something new.

"We have to realize the fact that they (the reps) have been representing our home audio, video and car stereo products for so long that a lot of

Kenwood's KSR-1000 stereo satellite receiver with remote

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During 1986 Kenwood will observe its 25th anniversary in consumer electronics and will celebrate the milestone with special promotions and programs to help dealers sell its products.

The Model KSP-1000 antenna positioner

them haven't gotten into satellite TV," Spaise said. "It's new with them. So we not only have to educate our dealers — converting them to carry our products — but we have to get our reps up to par."

To do this, Kenwood brought in two members of each firm's sales team to Kenwood USA's corporate offices in southern California and gave them a hands-on introduction to satellite TV.

"We had reps actually doing installations and aiming dishes," Spaise said, "during a two-day seminar. We had them doing comparisons between us and just about everyone else in the marketplace who is at our price point or close to it. It was very extensive, and we'll continue to do these types of things."

In addition to training programs and point of purchase material, Kenwood offers its dealers a cooperative advertising program, providing funds equal to 3 percent of a dealer's purchases to help with advertising expense.

"We help our dealers in an extensive way," Spaise said. "Anybody who has ever dealt with Kenwood in home or car stereo and more especially in short wave realizes that if there's anything we can supply them in the way of support material, we will do it. It's the same with satellite TV."

Spaise points with pride to the fact that 1986 marks Kenwood's 25th anniversary in consumer electronics, an event observed with special promotions and additional dealer materials. New posters, ad slicks and advertisements hearlding the anniversary will give impetus to Kenwood sales. Sales of the Kensat system will benefit, though there is still work to do, according to Spaise, before they reach the desired number of dealer outlets for the Kensat.

"We only started shipping in May and June of '85," he said, "and for starting at that point in the ball game, we've done really well. Right now we're about halfway there, and the people we have are really quality. That's what the red triangle in our logo means — it's the Japanese symbol for quality.

"And that's what people expect from Kenwood."

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TVRO Trivia Games On Electric Patio Tables

By William Gunn

Spin-off products of the TVRO industry have opened a new world for home earth station owners. New accessories can make it easier to combat strict zoning laws, help keep your dish sparkling clean or challenge your satellite knowledge.

Tommy and John Neyhart expect to make a nice profit in the satellite industry this year. The two brothers from Roseburg, Ore., along with partner Dick Sumner, made their debut at last year's Nashville show. If you guessed that they're manufacturers, you're wrong. And they aren't distributors either. Dealers? No.

Actually, the trio is part of a small but growing minority in the satellite industry who make TVRO-related products. Like many industries, TVRO is turning out 'spin-off' products — merchandise designed to cash in on the strong sales of home satellite systems.

The Neyharts and partner Sumner are part of the growing number of entrepreneurs who are catching on to the success generated by the satellite industry. "Dish It Out" is the satellite earth station owner's answer to the hordes of question and answer board games out today.

According to Tom Neyhart, sales of the game, which premiered last September, are well over 1,500. "Sales have been absolutely excellent," he said. "We're selling it to the distributors and dealers mostly, but consumers are buying it, too."

Fireside Games

Sumner originally came up with the idea of a satellite game to use as a sales tool. Then John and Tom developed the concept on a camping trip. The first board design was a little rough, Tom admits; it was drawn in the dirt — pine cones and needles represented tokens and pieces of the game.

When the Neyharts returned from their camping trip, the trio began working on the game in earnest in

order to have it ready for the Nashville show. John drew the illustrations on the board and box, and Tom wrote the game's 200 questions. "Test questions come normally to me," Tom laughed, "I'm a teacher." Sumner acted as a technical director.

Tom said "Dish It Out" made it to the Nashville show with only one and a half hours to spare — but the reception was worth it. "Everybody was coming to our booth. People were very, very interested."

While Sumner and the Neyharts wait for a snowball effect that will make "Dish It Out" as popular as its subject, sales are increasing daily. The game's sales have reached all 50 states as well as nine of ten Canadian provinces. "Things are going excellently," Tom laughs. "In six months, I can't imagine how far this thing will have gone."

Zoning Answers

Mac and Clarence McGillen are another family team making headway in the industry with a TVRO accessory line. Mac and his son manufacture the PAT-SAT, a clever answer to strict community zoning laws.

The McGillens sell a complete 6-foot satellite system, but with one hitch — the antenna is covered with a striped canopy and a wooden table surrounds the pole under the dish. So when one of McGillen's PAT-SATs is installed, it looks more like patio furniture than the sometimes offensive satellite systems that are forbidden by meticulous zoning laws in many of the communities which surround McGillen's Arlington, Va., home.

"There's been a lot of talk about zoning problems and zoning restrictions," McGillen said. "I don't know of any community that doesn't allow picnic tables and umbrellas though. That's where the thinking for the PAT-SAT came in."

McGillen got the idea for his "electronic picnic table" from Asheville, N.C., inventor, Bob Slagle, after receiving a number of calls from people who were anxious to have satellite television in communities with laws against it. Two nearby areas, Reston, Va., and Columbia, Md., each have populations upwards of 40,000 . . . and ordinances forbidding the installation of satellite antennas. "Those could both be big markets, McGillen said, "but this product is going to do well even when zoning is no longer a problem. When it was invented, it was with aesthetics in mind rather than zoning problems."

Although some communities have seen through his clever facade, McGillen said none have been able to force the removal of a PAT-SAT antenna. "It really is a picnic table and it really is an umbrella whatever else it is. One lawyer told a man who wanted to bring suit against one of these he wouldn't do it because he knew he couldn't win it. The question is how do you define an antenna? If you unplug it, it's no longer an antenna."

Not only can McGillen's PAT-SAT protect an owner against harsh neighborhood restrictions, he said, it also protects the antenna from outdoor elements and extends the life of the owner's investment. "The canopy covers the feed, and it's built in such a way that it never allows rain to get on the feed. It's good protection that should extend the life of the feed, and it will deep the antenna itself cooler."

Although McGillen introduced the PAT-SAT only recently (the 1985 Nashville show), he said sales are climbing . . . rapidly. "We are currently producing 50 per week. We plan to increase our capacity until we reach 1,000 because the accessory market is going to progress. It's going to boom."

Cleaning Up

Since scrambling issues took a sizeable bite out of the TVRO market late last fall, you wouldn't expect a product related to the satellite industry to sell very well. But that's not the case if you listen to Randy Skalla, president of S & S Company of Georgia, Inc., an industrial chemical company in Albany, Ga.

S & S recently obtained the rights for the "Dish Maid" — a product that may be the most promising of any TVRO spin-off yet. The Dish Maid is a satellite cleaning kit designed to keep home earth station antennas free from debris caused by outdoor elements, and the reception for the product has been surprisingly good.

According to Skalla, sales of the Dish Maid were, at one point, well over 100 kits a week. Although Skalla terms current sales as only "fair," he said a key to future success will be in convincing the home market of the Dish Maid's neccessity. "I don't know if the home market has really accepted that a clean dish is really that important other than just looking bad when they're dirty, and they really do look atrocious."

Skalla said even though there is no clinical proof to back his theory up, he believes debris on the antenna interferes with reception quality. "Basically our thought is algae, debris and other stains that get on the dish over a period of time must interfere with the picture. There are

(Continucd on page 78)

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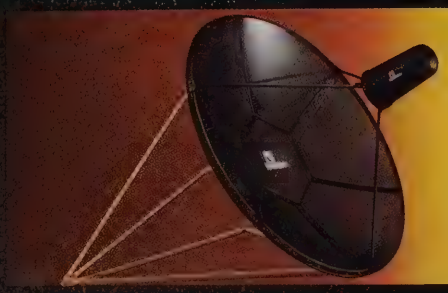

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Put on your best suit and get ready to smile, now that descramblers are available, it's time to court customers again. Most marketers are saying if dealers can become knowledgable and answer questions up front, sales shouldn't be far behind.

Selling Decoders

(Continued from page 18)

to be a big boost to the consumer. He'll see the purchase of a home dish and subscribing to the service as being a good thing to do."

Still, said Doney, the major concern for dealers is overcoming the obstacle of consumer objections. "What really needs to be done is the dealer should ideally be able to say, 'What about scrambling? Okay, there will be descramblers available, it will probably be one unit that you have to buy. In the future, the price probably will come down, so you may or may not want to purchase it right away. The packages that are put together for programming will bring the price down. So in the future, you will be able to receive 10, 12 or how ever many channels, the major channels that are now scrambled, you'll be able to receive them at a reasonable rate-say around $20 or $25 a month versus right now it looks like it will be $100 or $200 a month.' "

Another way to sell a descrambler is to emphasize its potential future uses, Doney said. "The box has a lot of other features other than just descrambling video — it's a message center, you have pay-per-view capabilities. For instance, first run movies, movies that have just been made in Hollywood. Maybe the producers want to increase the movie's viewership by five million people. All they have to do is make it available over the Videocipher II unit and you have people going to the theatre to see it, and you also have home TVRO owners who have an access box, and they can call up and say, 'I want to see Rocky IV tonight, bill me on a pay-per-view basis.' "

Actually, decoders are the first step in two-way communications and expanding the communications aspect of TVRO systems, Doney said. "So, all of these things can be presented to a customer and the customer is going to say, 'Hey, in the future that will actually be a benefit to me. I will be able to use that box for this and this and it's not going to close me off.' "

But another question that may not be too far back in the minds of dealers is whether there will even be a market for descramblers. As one Texas-based dealer said, "it's like the chicken or the egg question, which came first? The first question we need to know before we're told how to sell them (decoders) is if there will be a market for them or any TVRO equipment at all."

Berg said the market for descramblers and TVRO equipment is there. Channel Master is counting on a large and untapped non-cable market. "If we accept the fact of a scrambled environment let's say by 1987, then we know it will be much more difficult to sell to consumers in cable areas and we can put aside the cable sections and deal only with non-cable areas. There are about 20 million homes that don't have access to cable, and if we take the cable companies' penetration figures of 50 percent or greater, then we should say we have a reasonable expectation of selling to half of the population. If we take that 20 million and just discard 10 million because they don't have a look angle, they don't have the money, they don't want more television or whatever, and say out of that 10 million we should be able to sell half — that's five million. We've only sold a million and a quarter in the years we've been at it. So, there's plenty of market out there and if the cable people can sell 50 percent, the satellite dealers should be able to sell the same programming at approximately the same fees and get the same penetration."

Which brings us back to selling decoders. One arguement Doney cautions dealers against using is the often-heard 'even with scrambling, there will still be plenty up there for you to watch' argument. "I just don't think that the argument of there still being a hundred channels left or whatever, is the proper arguement, it's not the correct way to handle this. Why? It doesn't bury the objection of scrambling and what you really have to do is bury the objection. When the customer asks you about scrambling, you say, 'Here are the answers to scrambling. Do you understand what I just told you?' 'Yes, I understand.' Okay, now you're ready to go ahead and close the sale. And if it can be handled that way — intelligently and by giving the proper answers and having the consumers aware and the dealers aware of the proper answers, then it becomes just another objection like, 'oh, the price is too high,' or 'that thing is ugly.' It's just another objection that you have to bury."

1976 Copyright Law Adds To Satellite TV Confusion

By Jim Gray

Concern over what lies ahead for the TVRO industry has raised some important questions, including how the Copyright Act of 1976 applies. Compensation for viewing copyrighted material is only fair, but proposals for finding ways for the home dish owner to pay have been met with silence.

Today you don't have to look very hard to find the stamp of respectability on the TVRO industry. Just look at some of the names emblazoned on the hardware—Panasonic, Uniden, Kenwood and other electronics giants who see the potential and want to share the harvest.

On the home front, no satellite system owner has to cast furtive looks over his shoulder to see if the Feds are about to bust him for piracy.

Right?

Of course that's right. We're perfectly legal, cloaked safely in the rhetoric of the Cable Communications Act of 1984.

Then why has this industry, which holds such promise for hundreds of entrepreneurs and the thousands more employees who make their livelihood from it, experienced such bewildering peaks and valleys and left everyone involved wondering just what is going on? Why shouldn't the business show the steady upward growth line that looks so good on the corporate charts?

If we can believe some of the industry's soothsayers, prosperity is just around the corner.

The trouble is, turning one corner seems only to lead to another. The recent announcement by the New York superstation WOR is a good example.

WOR plans to scramble its signal March 1, using M/A-Com's Videocipher technology. It has instructed its cable operators, some 1300 across the country, to install the equipment at their headends — at their own expense.

Gil Korta, national marketing director for Eastern Microwave, Inc., the company that distributes WOR's signal to its cable affiliates, said the March 1 date is firm and cable operators are in the process of installing the equipment.

The next logical question is, abiding by the Cable Communications Act, what marketing provisions are in place to distribute WOR's scrambled signal to home dish owners?

The answer, Korta said, is no provision whatsoever.

"We'd love to be able to sell to home dish owners," Korta said. "We could use the money. But our attorneys say we cannot legally offer the service to the home dish market because of the Copyright Act . . . the way it defines a cable system."

EMI's position is that its highly regulated common carrier status would be jeopardized if WOR's signals were received by viewers who had not directly or indirectly paid fees into the Copyright Tribunal, which passes payments on to copyright holders.

EMI cites the language of the Copyright Act of 1976, which was enacted well before home earth stations entered the picture, as the basis for its position.

The Copyright Act of 1976 provides in essence for the protection of copyrighted material and requires compensation to copyright holders on created works — such as movies — that are offered for viewing via satellite. Cable companies are covered by "compulsory license," a term that denotes cable's legitimate right under the Copyright Law to distribute copyrighted programming for which compensation has been paid.

"Point-Of-Sale" License

In testimony before Congressman Robert Kastenmeir's subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties and the Administration of Justice, SPACE counsel Rick Brown pointed out that SPACE had suggested on several occasions a "point-of-sale" license for TVRO owners that would provide revenues for payment to copyright holders. A negotiated fee would be placed on the sale of a home system and the money would go to copyright owners.

At the subcommittee hearing Brown noted that home viewing of programming does not violate the Copyright Law, but copyright holders should be fairly compensated.

"The home earth station industry's philosophical commitment to compensate copyright holders is well-documented," Brown said. "But irrespective of our good intentions, another more practical reality makes compensation of copyright owners a priority and that is the introduction of scrambling technology. With the current distribution of signals in a scrambled mode, it is clear that programming can be easily withheld unless the demanded payment is made. That's why a fair and equitable resolution to the issue of compensation for receipt of programming via home earth stations is essential."

But so far any suggestion for "fair and equitable resolution" has fallen on deaf ears, and one has to wonder why.

Could it be that programmers, feeling heavy pressure from powerful cable operators, have found a handy loophole through which they can beam scrambled signals without offering a method of marketing their programs to home dish owners?

Or is it, as EMI's Korta intimated, a legislative glitch that prevents programming distributors from selling to home dish owners, as much as they would like to do so?

Catch-22, 1986-style! It's all part of a continuing morass of proposed legislation, interpretation of existing law, rumor, enuendo, misinformation, truth and half-truth that has entangled the TVRO industry and put sales on a roller coaster. The American buying public, as ready as ever to try something new and innovative, especially in home entertainment, are in a state of confusion. Satellite dealers, meanwhile, are in a tenuous position.

Confusion Reigns

One good example of the way confusion is fostered is offered by dealer Bill Osborne, owner of Star Equipment in Gate City, Va. Osborne points to flyers distributed "as a public service" by a local cable company which hint strongly that buying a satellite system was tantamount to buying a white elephant.

"Someday," the flyers read, "legal decoders will be available for home use. But no one knows when and no one knows how much they will cost . . . If you're considering buying a satellite dish, we urge you to ask the dealer some questions first. Don't get stuck with thousands of dollars of useless equipment."

Such information should be interesting news to M/A-Com, which committed to having sufficient numbers of its home descramblers in the distribution pipeline by the time HBO began full-time scrambling on January 15. M/A-Com's home version of their VideoCipher descrambler is offered for sale to dish owners at around $400. Moreover HBO, complying with the Cable Communications Act of 1984, has put in place a method of marketing its programming to home dish owners, and even if HBO's pricing structure has evoked cries of gouging, the fact remains that the program was initiated.

If HBO and other programmers like Ted Turner, who announced that CNN, Headline News and WTBS would scramble later this year, can market to home earth station owners, why can't WOR?

"They (WOR) simply say that they don't have the authorization to distribute the signal to the home earth station owner," said Randy Fink, an assistant to SPACE counsel Rick Brown. "I don't personally see that's necessarily the case, but with all that's going on, it's a good excuse for them to use to try to put earth stations out of business.

"But regardless of whether or not at this point they have the authorization, they will have once the legislation is passed clearing up these problems. If they don't plan now to sell to home dish owners, they may have to change their plans very quickly. What's going on right now is pretty much cut-throat, and that's what we're working on (through legislation).

Fink cited the scrambling of Ted Turner's WTBS, scheduled for September 1, as an example of the cable industry's tactics.

"The reason Turner is scrambling is because they threatened to drop him," he said. "TCI (Tele-Communications Inc.) threatened to drop him. But once it becomes a fair and open marketplace, it'll definitely become a refusal to deal issue and they will once again have to deal with home dish owners."

Fink said the Copyright Act of 1976 should in no way be a deterrent to viewing satellite programming by home earth station owners, although some anti-TVRO forces may try to make it one.

"The cable companies are shaking in their shoes right now," he said. "They're looking for any avenue that would even temporarily discourage people from buying dishes and using dishes. It's like a propaganda war, and we need to start running our own ads. We've got to get to the dealers out there — and the public — and tell them what's really going on."

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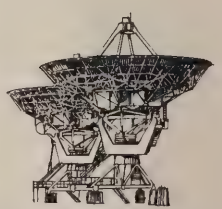

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Circle No. 121 On Reader Service Card.

Satellite Savvy, Steady Hand Aid Tuning To Ku

By Tom Perry, Technical Editor

Rounding up the equipment and getting my first Ku-band system up and running was reminiscent of 1980 and my first C-band efforts. Questions abound on equipment choices and reception methods. To sort out all the choices and compare notes with others who were putting up 12 GHz systems I, as in 1980, turned to my fellow members of the Amateur Radio TVRO Experimentors Network. Ku-band methods have been the hot topic lately.

Growing Program List

Most of the discussion surrounds the various feed and antenna system designs and what equipment goes with which Low Noise Amplifier, etc. Of course "Whats On Where," the favorite satellite trivia game, has gained a whole new dimension. On Ku-band you won't find those satellite identification test patterns so often found on the C-band birds. Having at least a general idea of what programs you expect to see — and where they are on what satellites — is essential to the proper set-up of your first Ku-band system.

Your best first shot is to aim at SBS3 (95 degrees West), place the feedhorn horizontal and look for Tom Brokaw. NBC fans will love Ku-band, at least for the moment. You can see everything at least three times. You also find the football games that aren't shown on F3 #8 that list as NBC games in the log — with two nonstop versions of the NFL Today as a bonus. Sorry, I didn't spot any live Johnny Carson feeds, but I'm still looking. In general if you like live news feeds and sports NBC style, SBS3 is a good place to watch.

NBC programming should move shortly to the new K2 satellite, launched from the shuttle in November. This high powered RCA bird should put in a strong signal, so keep your eyes open for its impending activation.

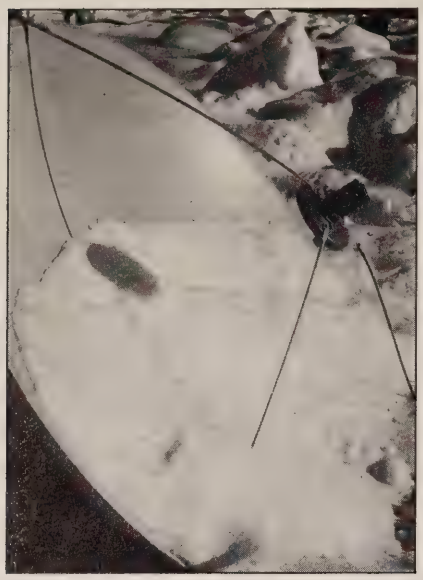
Another active bird is Anik C #2 at 105 degrees west. This satellite is due to move to 112.5 west by the time you read this. It is also scheduled to be tilted back toward Canada to get the footprint further north. It was tilted down toward the continental U.S. to accommodate USCI. Remember them? So the stateside footprint will get worse after the move. Right now I find a Canadian version of Showtime, ESPN, WTBS, and Headline News. The only difference in the Canadian version is that advertisements for Canadian products are inserted.

The TBS feed changes to a movie channel at night that shows some movies before they air on C-Band. I watched "2010", for example. It seems to be a hotel DBS service like the defunct American Network Movies that used to be on C-band. They run the same two or three movies every night. The guide calls it Showcase DBS.

I was able to get sparkle free reception on most services with the six-foot True Focus here in Idaho. Right now I receive very clean pictures on all but one channel, but that could change for the worse when they move and tilt the satellite. In the southern half of the continental U.S., it will be a tough shot even for larger dishes. By the way, the hot spot for most west coast spot beams is in Reno, Nev. For the east coast — Nashville, Tenn.

I found one active transponder on SBS4 at 90W, airing one channel called Atlantic Satellite Network, a service for shopping malls. High tech teleconferencing is found on G Star 1 at 103.4 degrees west. Mostly advanced engineering courses between Universities and businesses. Chico State in California is a frequent user. G Star offsets the polarity about 30 degrees from vertical. This is done to minimize rain attenuation. Anik C3(17.5 W), another Canadian bird, has programs in French and English, plus a movie channel. Occasional feeds have been spotted on Spacenet 1

Technical editor Tom Perry points to Ku feed positioned inside a C-band scalar plate.



Snow on the reflector did not prevent clear reception of Ku signals.

and ASC1 with more to come.

Finding The Channels

Special thanks to Bob (W6RRT), Chris (NNOV), Virgil (KG4I) and Bill (WA7WQV) from the Net for getting me straight on what I was finding on the Ku-birds. It's a bit of a challenge to ascertain what you're watching on which Ku-bird on the first try. This is due to the differences in the C and Ku-band plan, among other things we'll get into a bit later. I will also note that what I've seen in the program guides to date is not extremely accurate, complete nor up to date and offers little help in setting up the system. Part of the problem is that the services move around more frequently on Ku-band and don't always show up on the same transponders, plus there are a lot of new services coming on all the time.

As you know, the Ku-band LNB takes the passband of the satellites transmitted signal and block downconverts these signals to an identical band of signals at a lower frequency, typically 950 to 1450 MHz (in some cases, notably DX equipment, 900-1400 MHz). This happens to be the same block of frequencies that the C-band high frequency block receivers operate. The result being that the same receiver can work for both C- and Ku-bands. You can't mix these two ranges up as regards LNBs, LNFs, and the different receivers. The 900 to 1400Mhz LNBs can't be used with a 950 to 1450 MHZ receiver, either at C- or Ku-band. You cannot use a DX Ku-band LNB and feed and feed it to a Chaparral Sierra or Luxor receiver, for example. At the very least you will miss one or two of the low or high channels if you attempt to do so. Whether it's the high or low channels you miss depends on if the signal is "high side" or "low side" injected into the crystal oscillator in the downconversion process. The important thing is this is a function of the varying passbands. You have to match the input passband of the receiver to the output passband of the LNB or LNF you are using, regardless if it is for a C- or Ku-band application.

Another outcome of this difference between high side and low side injection is the channels may read out inverted on the receivers display. In other words, what the Program Guide lists as channel 24 is displayed as channel one on your receiver when used at Ku-band. In order to display the same channel number as listed in the guide, the channel numbers would have to be inverted by the receiver. Channel one would have to be designated channel 24 by the program in the receiver, and vice versa down the line. Some of the newest receivers do just that — the Sierra and Luxor for example. On the Arunta, the actual 12 GHz frequency is displayed in the Ku-mode in place of a channel number.

There is one more little quirk you need to know when tuning in your first Ku-system. The center frequencies of some of the channels are not the same at Ku-band as they are at C-band. Therefore, you sometimes have to tune to the outer ranges of the receivers video fine tuning adjustment to receive some of the channels, especially on the mid-band channels. You may have to go the next lower or higher channel, change polarity and go to the far opposite range of the fine-tuning to maximize the signal.

With a fully synthesized receiver that has no video fine-tuning control, you may not be able to tune in all the available channels. Unlike a pass band matching problem, this is a "tuning within the pass-band" problem. The result is that programming in your first Ku-band satellite into your receiver may be a bit more of a challenge than you might have first guessed. It helps if you have had some experience with the receiver at C-band before your first Ku-band effort. Remember to enter the information into the receiver's memory before tuning in the next channel or you will have to retune the video and audio the next time you return to that position. I should mention that the most common audio frequencies are 5.51 and 6.20 Mhz. The standard 6.8 Mhz used on C-band is rarely used.

By the way, most of the transponders are transmitting inverted video as well. Some of the latest dual band receivers take care of the video inversion problem by inverting all of the video when you select the Ku-mode; the Luxor does it this way. In others you do it channel by channel through the program in the receiver — the Sierra and Arunta are examples of that approach. Either way works well. I have yet to see any top receivers without an invert switch of some kind.

Antenna And Feed Selection

When thinking of a Ku-system there is one major choice to be made: that is whether to try to dual feed an existing C-band antenna system or to install a separate dish for the Ku-band. Of the two, using an existing C-band system is the most difficult to install and yields less viewer options than a two antenna system. Let's compare the two methods.

When dual-band feeding your existing C-band antenna system, you have to consider the following: by offsetting your Ku-band feed, you will not be focused at the antenna's hot spot. You will experience some signal loss over the same antenna if it's center-fed with the Ku-band hardware. The amount of this loss varies with the antenna size, shape, F/D ratio and size of the mesh in antennas that use mesh — either exposed or imbedded in fiber glass. Antenna designers are working on rotatable buttonhooks that will center feed each band's feed one at a time by alternately rotating the K- and C-band feeds into the center position.

(continued on page 92)

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Country Approach Works For Small Town Dealer

By John Brannon

Somewhere off the beaten path of I-59 north of Laurel, Miss., a TVRO dealer and his partner are taking a little more time with customers. Good country people, Jim Matthews, president, Sharon Satellite Sales & TV, calls them. The name "Sharon" is derived from the Sharontown community where the main store is located. The spot is so small that it's not even incorporated.

Matthews and his partner, Glenn Ulmer, operate two stores, one in Sharontown and another in Taylorsville, about 40 miles west of Laurel. These two guys must be doing something right.

About three years ago they expanded their refrigeration and appliance business and included satellite TV. Since then they've sold and installed about 1,200 systems. Matthews attributes their success to reputation and service.

Having been established in the refrigeration/air conditioning business 10 years, the transition to TVRO helped sales. People knew them by their good reputation. "That was a key factor to start off with," Matthews said, "but the biggest thing I've found (that helps us) is that we're actually going to them. If people have a problem, they call us and we go see about it."

Matthews and Ulmer have six technicians — Mike Ulmer, Steve James, Mike Hollifield, Danny Rhodes, Sherman Livingston and David Dye — who install and service systems. Each wears a pager to speed contact with both stores.

Direct burial cable and PVC pipe are used with every installed system. The systems range from a 6-foot dish at $750 to larger systems for as much as $3,000.

Matthews said they keep as many as 50 dishes on hand at all times, "and for the Christmas rush, about 300, along with the electronics." He buys from Tri-Glas Industries, Daleville, Ala.; Wright Technology, Hattiesburg, Miss.; and the National Micro-Dynamics warehouse at Meridian, Miss.

The Taylorsville store opened about a year ago, and Matthews said sales were slow at first. "People over there are not as familiar with TVRO, but it's got good potential. There are hardly any competitors there, the nearest is about 40 miles away. There's a whole new territory to be developed. Our main sales are through the Sharon store."

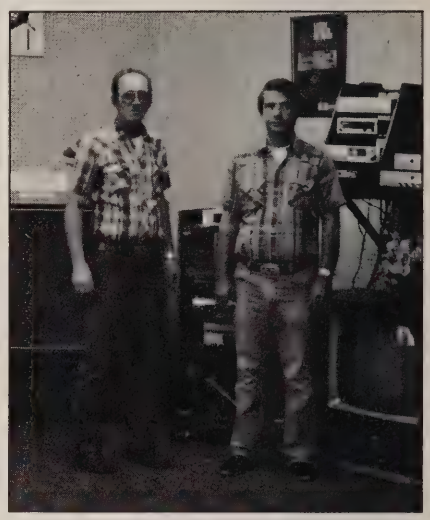
The growth of both stores in TVRO sales has pleased and surprised both Matthews and Ulmer. At first, they proceeded with only part-time TVRO sales; then as business grew, it was decision time.

Satellite TV or refrigeration/air conditioning? They chose to stay with TVRO and have gradually phased out the other business.

Advertising And Financing

"All kinds of financing," Matthews said, "are available right here. Plus, we've got extended warranty contracts and regular warranty. A customer can buy up to five years on a maintenance agreement. We also sell storm protection we obtain through a Jackson firm. It costs a customer about three percent per year of the purchase price and runs for the life of the contract. They can get that along with a maintenance agreement and they've got 100 percent coverage."

Advertising response has been greater with the local "shopper," than with standard newspaper or radio ads. Some of the best exposure, according to Matthews, was a



Jim Matthews and Glen Ulmer, owners of Sharon Satellite & TV.

Sharon Satellite and TV's storefront attracts customers in southern Mississippi

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Reputation and service can be established only through a proven track record. Jim Matthews and Glen Ulmer have won both labels. Having 1,200 TVRO systems sold and installed in southern Mississippi, their dealership is well known.

week's display at the Sawmill Mall in Laurel. About 35 sales were realized from the display, "and that kept us busy for about two weeks."

Scrambling Hurts

Matthews said sales have been good, and will be better, but the scrambling controversy has undoubtedly hurt the TVRO dealer.

"Until people realize that HBO and Cinemax are not the lifeline of satellite TV, when they realize there's something up there besides those two, then you'll see sales increasing," Matthews said. "I look for this year to be stronger, but only as soon as the word gets out. People are confused right now, ignorant to the fact that only two channels of all the satellites up there are scrambled. They're not being made aware of what's actually happening. Until that is corrrected, there'll be a slump in sales, and in fact it's already shown.

"The people we've talked to say they aren't going to buy a descrambler. Now if they get down to a reasonable price, descramblers will sell. Oh, you'll get a few who'll buy, anyway — money poeple, just to say, 'I've got it.' But the whole key is that money people aren't buying satellite systems. It's mid-range and lower-class people who are buying, and they're not going to pay the cost of a $400 descrambler."

An intensive campaign to educate the consumer about the scrambling controversy is needed, Matthews said. "They're scared that if they buy a satellite system, it's not going to be any use at all, that it's going to be a total wipe-out.

"That's the whole idea of it. Everything up there is not going to be scrambled. If it was, there'd be World War III. You don't sell something to the American consumer and turn around and take it away from him. TVRO is here, it's the age of electronics, and it's the future. What we've seen so far is nothing at all compared to what's coming."

Spending More Time

There's a lot to be said for being off the beaten path, sales-wise. In a nutshell: more time with the customer. The showrooms at Taylorsville and Sharon aren't elaborately decorated, and neither is ever filled with browsing customers. The overall atmosphere is one of relaxation and a chance to sit down and talk with the salesman. There's even a coffee pot and cups at a serve-yourself spot.

"Everybody knows that service was provided on the other equipment, and that they'll get service from us on satellite systems," Matthews said. "That helped, of course, and no doubt about it, word-of-mouth helps, too. We make a commitment to our people. I tell them that we're going to provide them the best equipment we possibly can, that we won't guarantee they won't have problems, but if they do, we're here to take care of them. That's what we're here for. We're not going to sell a system to a customer and then forget them, consider that sale a thing of the past.

"We do spend a lot of time with a customer. We're in an out-of-the-way location and there's not a lot of traffic passing the storefront every day. But I can devote a lot of time to a customer — show him the product, how it works, what he can get in the way of programming. We've got nothing fancy, nothing lavish in our showrooms. We're dealing with country people. They don't feel uncomfortable in the surroundings. And that's important.

"We take care of them and have always done it. Sometimes I think we do too much, but it pays off."

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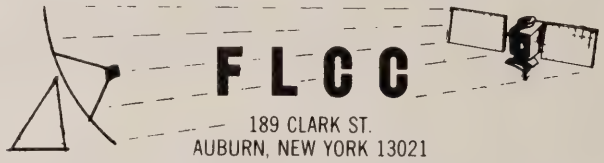

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SPACE Launches Weekly Telecast

SPACE has launched a weekly news and features telecast as part of its newly-formed Earth Station Network (ESN). The Tuesday evening telecast is a joint venture between SPACE and Nova Video Productions.

The first show (Dec. 3) was a two-hour live telecast from Washington, D.C. and consisted of up-to-the-minute industry news briefs on the latest legislative developments from the nation's capitol and various state and local levels.

Reports included updates on scrambling, zoning, dealer certification, voluntary technical standards, marketing campaigns and other industry news. Reports were supplied through SPACE and through its law firm, Brown & Finn.

SPACE also gave viewers an opportunity to call in with their questions during the live telecast.

SPACE and Nova are co-producing the segments and plan to alternate schedules with SPACE producing the show at Washington, D.C. one week, and Nova producing it from Madison, Wis. the next.

The Washington segments are produced by Hero Communications President Robert Behar, who is also treasurer of the SPACE board of directors. The Madison segments are produced by Pat Olsen of Nova, which is headed up by John Kaul.

Separately, SPACE, through ESN, has plans to provide live coverage of the industry's major trade shows and also of the congressional hearings scheduled for early 1986.

Duncombe Opens New York Office

Duncombe Electronics Corporation, an Erie, Penn. based wholesale electronics distributor, recently announced the opening of a branch operation in Elmira, New York.

Duncombe has been servicing dealers and industrial accounts in New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio. Their Satellite TV Systems Division features Winegard satellite systems. Duncombe also handles equipment from Amphenol, Belden, RCA, Syslvania, Cooper and Beckman in their General Line Electronics Division.

T.M. Popovich, whose past corporate affiliations include Westinghouse Electric and Rockwell International, is general manager for the Elmira branch.

STS Announces Five-Year Warranty

Satellite Technology Services of Maryland Heights, Mo. recently announced that effective immediately all STS receivers and antenna controllers sold after November 13, 1985, would carry a five-year limited warranty. The warranty applies to all parts and labor for the following products: LSR receiver/antenna controller, the SR block receiver, the SRB receiver and the AA antenna controller.

Price Waterhouse, an independent auditor, found that STS repaired 85% of all products received for service within 48 hours.

In addition to the benefit to consumers, STS officials believe the five-year warranty will also provide STS dealers with a powerful selling feature on the STS satellite products line.

Satstar Names New Distributors

Satstar General Manager Jerry Moore announced the appointment of three new distributors for the company's satellite TV products. The new distributors are Jobe Electronics of Neosha, Mo., RES Distributors of Columbus, Ga. and Horizon of West Lafayette, Ind.

Satstar, a unit of Millimeter Wave Technology, manufactures and markets products for defense and commercial applications including microwave and millimeter wave sensors, antennas, specialized communications systems and radar absorbing materials.

M/A-Com Appoints Berg Special Projects Coordinator

Ralph Berg recently joined the M/A-Com management team and will be responsible for planning, coordinating and managing special projects. His first assignment will be the introduction of Videocipher.

Berg comes to M/A-Com from Scientific Atlanta HOMESAR/SMATV where, as products manager for the Video Communications Division, he oversaw the development and market introduction of Scientific Atlanta's new home satellite product line. Berg has worked in the home satellite or related communications fields since 1976. He is a graduate of the University of Miami.

Success. . . breeds success!

OUR BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

A DEALER is the most important person in our business.

A DEALER is not dependent upon us — we are dependent on him.

A DEALER is not an interruption of our work — he is the purpose of it.

A DEALER does us a favor when he calls — we are not doing him a favor by serving him.

A DEALER is part of our business — not an outsider.

A DEALER is not a cold statistic — he is a flesh and blood human being with feelings and emotions like our own.

A DEALER is not someone with whom to argue or match wits.

A DEALER is a person who brings us his wants — it is our job to fill those wants.

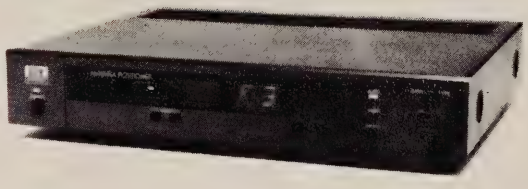
A DEALER is deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment we can give him.

A DEALER is the fellow who makes it possible to pay our salary whether we are a truck driver, plant employee, office employee, salesman, manager or president.

A DEALER is the life-blood of this and every other business.

STS

DRAKE



DX ANTENNA

DX ANTENNA

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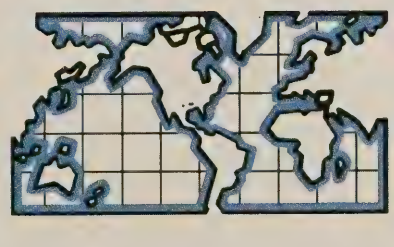

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(318) 468-2201 Tech. Assistance
(318) 468-2203 Local

Satellite Earth Stations of Florida, Inc.
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Orlando, Florida 32805
305-843-0272
305-843-0273
FL. 800-826-1945

JoMil Electronics, Inc.
Industry Lane, Covington, LA 70433
(800) 654-9144 U.S. Sales
(800) 558-0019 LA Sales
(504) 893-4514 Local

Satellite Earth Stations of Georgia, Inc.
2039 Oglesby Pl., Macon, GA 31206
(800) 334-9819 *U.S. Sales*
(800) 553-1976 *Ga. Sales*
(912) 743-9099 *Local*

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d.b.a. Satellite Earth Stations
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(800) 325-5043 U.S. Sales
(800) 252-3457 TX Sales
(512) 385-0738 Local

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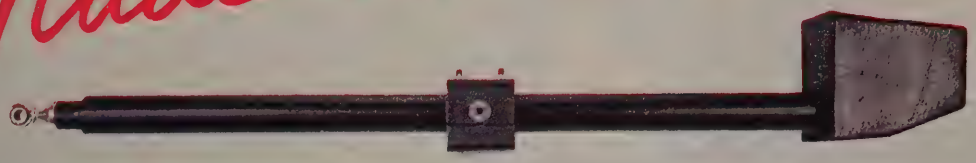
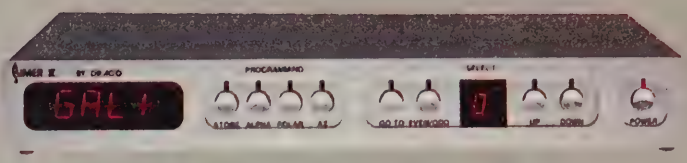


Power Actuators

Draco's 18" and 27" power actuators provide the complete answer to satellite dish movement, polarity, and remote control. These actuators operate at 12 to 36 volts with self-resetting current protection, and rate at over 2,000 pounds. Their superb styling incorporates sealed tubes, solid lubrication, Timken roller bearings, solid steel gears, as well as anti-jamming features. Positively the best Power Actuators built!!

*All Draco Aimers include either the 18" or 27" Linear Actuator.

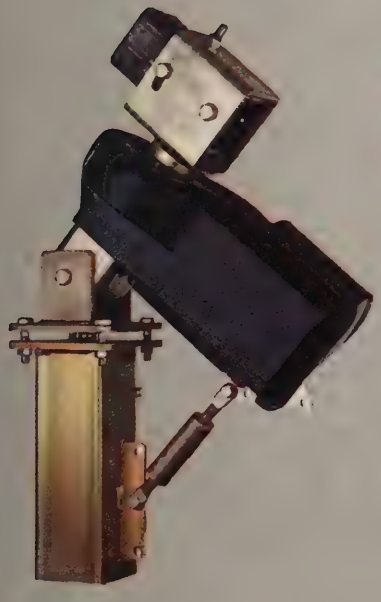


AIMER IV*

This user-friendly, sleekly styled dish positioner features programmable polarity with automatic skew, programmable travel limits, optional receiver interface, and manual or automatic fine tuning capability. The Aimer IV's large display panel enables you to read, select, and change any satellite, all from your easy chair, with the Aimer IV's remote control!

AIMER II*

With the Aimer II's exclusive fast pass, this dish positioner inputs any satellite location in less than 12 seconds. Push GO TO, and the activator makes one smooth run to the new location. The Aimer II is completely self-contained with its own built in power supply, a must for the discriminating viewer.



Tru-Align™ Polarmount

The Tru-Align™ motorized polarmount is truly the finest available on the market today. Compatible with most antennas, the Tru-Align™ utilizes the same reliable system as the Draco Linear Actuators. Its infared opto-pulse circuit generates pulses with a minimum amount of noise and interference. If you need horizon to horizon flexibility to zero in on any satellite, the Tru-Align™ polarmount is a must for your motorized antenna positioning.

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DX is budget priced.

The Profit Line.

DX ANTENNA

DX has combined high performance with budget prices. Introducing the new DSB-500 Satellite Receiver. It features a convenient TV-type tuner and pushbutton control to deliver both C and Ku-band programs, and the DSB-500 is descrambler ready. All at a price that will amaze you.

For complete information, contact your authorized DX distributor, or write: DX Communications, Inc., 10 Skyline Drive, Hawthorne, NY 10532.

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Stolle Appoints MacLeod Sales Representative

James A. MacLeod was recently named sales representative for Stolle Satellite Communications Division.

A division of the Stolle Corporation and a subsidiary of Alcoa, the Satellite Communications Division manufactures and markets aluminum antennas, mounts and feedhorns.

MacLeod represents the division's antennas nationally and handles customer relations, including antenna demonstrations and seminars.

Since joining Stolle, MacLeod has written the "Do-it-yourself" assembly instructions for Stolle's six-foot perforated, parabolic reflector, called SpaceMate.

Formerly the owner of the Total Entertainment Satellite, Inc., a Canadian-based TVRO dealer, MacLeod's vast experience in the satellite dealer and distributor marketplace is an asset for Stolle.

Echosphere Adds New Floorplanning Sources

Echosphere Corporation has added Borg-Warner Acceptance Corporation and ITT Commercial Finance Corporation dealer financing to its floorplanning program. With these additions, Echosphere offers four choices of floorplanning sources.

Echosphere will pay a dealer's first 30 days interest. This allows a dealer to maintain inventory in his showroom and warehouse free for 30 days. If a dealer has already been approved by ITT, Borg-Warner, WCC or GECC, Echosphere can obtain credit approval and ship the merchandise on that day if approval is given before 2 p.m.

SVS Expands Altoona Facility

Satellite Video Services recently enlarged its distribution center in Altoona, Pennsylvania. The new quarters include 5,000 square feet of office space and 10,000 square feet of warehouse space. SVS also added to their staff to facilitate the handling of customer orders. Their service department offers warranty service on Uniden and Luxor products. Weekly dealer training seminars will be available on Wednesday afternoons.

Norsat Supplies TVRO Equipment To Heath

Norsat International Inc. has accepted orders to supply satellite television equipment to Heath Company, a division of Zenith Electronics Corporation. Heath intends to sell these products through their network of 70 retail stores and include Norsat's products in their mail order catalog. Heath is a distributor of electronic equipment including user-assembled kits marketed under the brand name "Heathkit".

Luxor's Parent Company Creates New Organization

The Nokia Group, the giant Finnish consumer and industrial electronics concern, has formed a new corporate organization devoted exclusively to the design, manufacture, and marketing of satellite TV reception systems. The announcement was made by Hans Giner, president and chief executive officer of Luxor North America Corp., a Nokia subsidiary.

The new unit will be known as the Salora-Luxor Satellite Division and will develop, manufacture, and market components and systems for home satellite television systems, cable TV, pay TV, and data transmission via satellite.

Luxor North America Corp. will continue to be based in its present Bellevue, Wash. offices. In the North American market, the Salora-Luxor Satellite Division's products will continue to be sold under the Luxor brand name.

Luxor offers receivers with both C-band (4GHz) and Ku-band (12 GHz) capability.

Satco Opens Ohio Office

Satco USA, announces the grand opening of its Dayton, Ohio, sales and service center.

"We have established a sales/service center in the Dayton area to serve our growing dealer network in southwestern Ohio," said Vernon C. Crosier, president and company founder.

Satco USA's inventory has grown to nearly $2,000,000 and is still expanding. With the Dayton location, Satco USA now has sales/service centers in Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and the headquarters in Ohio.

Satco personnel will be on hand to talk about satellite installations and components.

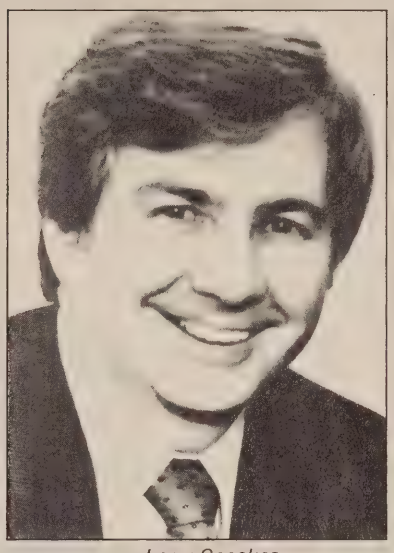
White House's Larry Speakes To Keynote Opportunities Expo

Assistant to the President Larry Speakes will be the keynote speaker at the Satellite Opportunities Expo and conference at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, April 6-8.

This is the first time a presidential assistant has participated in a satellite exposition and conference.

The Satellite Opportunities Expo for Home and Business is sponsored by the University of Mississippi and Opportunities Publishing, Inc. Approximately 8,000 participants are expected for the program, which includes a national conference on Ku and C-band satellite services for home and business. More than 300 exhibitors are anticipated.

Reservations for attendees and exhibitors should be made with Opportunities Publishing, Inc., 305 W. Jackson Ave., Oxford, MS 38655. Telephone: (601) 236-5510.



Larry Speakes

DX is stereo.
The Profit Line.
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ANTENNA
DX proudly introduces the DSB-700S Stereo Satellite Receiver with full-function remote control. It receives both C and Ku-band programs, comes descrambler ready, and it lets you select either discrete or matrix stereo sound, too. Plus, the picture-perfect quality that DX is famous for.
For complete information, contact your authorized DX distributor, or write: DX Communications, Inc., 10 Skyline Drive, Hawthorne, NY 10532.

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Taking The High Road Leads To Higher Profits

By Tim Olin

It is hard to understand how some people think. Take the way the satellite market has gone recently. You don't have to look very far to see dealers' bold type ads staring at us from newspapers. Low end! Total system for under $1000.00! Complete patio system for less than $500.00!

It seems to me that's starting to squeeze the profit margin down — way down. But what the heck, I can sell a few thousand of those at, let's see, $66.00 profit, times 500, divided by, subtracted from, ah, equals . . . WOW! One hundred thirty two thousand dollars profit.

Now I take out for the light bill, the shipping and handling, insurance, taxes, pay the help, the computer lease, a vehicle, gas, the trips to the Las Vegas and Nashville shows, advertising, legal fees, the accountant . . . .

Where's The Profit?

Ever have one of those conversations with yourself? Where does the answer lie when we talk profits? In volume or in the labor or in the equipment?

I know some dealers who blanche at the prospect of selling a high end system. When you mention that the dish alone runs $749.00, they fall down in shock. "My gosh," they say, "that means the whole system costs me $1795.00. I could never sell one of those. That's too much money."

I have seen business people who have no qualms about trying to sell a 9900 Luxor, but they put it with a $300.00 antenna. It somewhat flies in the face of whatever common sense we can muster, doesn't it?

Imagine being dressed in your best suit and tie and wearing your skin diving flippers, while on the way out to your fancy new Cadillac with the black side wall tires. That's similar to the way it is when you put an expensive receiver on a cheap dish.

And maybe you, like me, have heard it said that you should spend a little more money on the antenna because it sits outside and it gathers the signal, because of two degree spacing, dual band use, plus you can always upgrade your electronics, etc . . .

I don't know — maybe I'm living in the past. When I started in this business, LNAs were over $400.00 and all we had to sell were 12-foot dishes at $1500.00. It was in the days of the $3500.00 system. Sigh, they seem to all be gone. It's a race today to try to sell a $2500.00 system for $1600.00.

The fact of the matter is that I can put together a pretty darn good system for $3500.00. A twelve foot dish with a receiver that has all the goodies, a hot LNA, a mover, the cement, ground rod and block, installation, sales tax and maybe even throw in a program guide of some sort.

There is a mind set, an art to selling high-end, quality equipment. The first thing to realize is that there is good money in selling quality. I've driven the lowball express myself a few times and the ride seems to be a bit tenuous. Don't get me wrong. I know we have to have our leader items — the ones that get people in the door. And I know we have to compete with the big boys. But is there life at the top-of-the-line world? Yes.

Price plays a role in almost everything consumers buy, but nowhere is it written that the price has to be low. There is a strong market for high-end equipment, and with a little promotion and a good sales presentation, a dealer can see some welcome changes at the bottom line.

How does one go about selling the big money systems? Don't hide the good stuff. Advertise the fact that you do have systems that run as high as $3500 to $4000.00. Make that your leader item once in a while. You don't see Lincoln-Mercury dealers running ads that tout "cheap Lincolns." Curtis Mathes doesn't hide the fact that what they sell is expensive. They thrive on it. Neiman-Marcus has the audacity to ask hundreds of thousands of dollars for some of their whirligigs.

Start At The Top

That gets your foot in their door. Those people who have the desire and the money to purchase expensive systems know who has them — you. Why not use the reverse of the low leader theory? You can always sell down and on the way down you pass through all the systems, while in most cases starting at the bottom does not get you to the top end system.

Let the features sell the system. Remote control, ease of use, on-screen graphics, dual band (Ku and C) capabilities, dual feed ready, "brand name", warranty, automatic skew, signal seeking, volume control and A/B switching from your chair. Too often the audio portion of a system is not used in the selling process. Narrow and wide band audio is very important if you want to get total use of the system. Stereo is another selling feature that is slowly coming into its own. Sell the ability to add on other receivers and stress the fact that the actuator is totally programmed. Don't be afraid to ask a fair price for your product. Those extra features are worth it.

"But, wait," you say. "If you sell one of those fancy outfits, doesn't that mean more problems because it's more complex?" Most receiver and actuator manufacturers are striving hard to put out product that works. They are doing a better job of taking care of problems. They know they must if they want to

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Keeping Up With New Technology
Advertising Effectively

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Satellite Video Services™

The Northeast's Leading Distributor

SECOND TO NONE

#1 with Commitment to the Satellite Industry

#1

At Satellite Video Services we repeatedly assert our commitment to a bright future. We're developing more dynamic marketing programs and discovering new growth areas for dealers. Our research of new products enables us to bring dealers the right products at the right price. Our 2 new locations further these assets and support our major goal—responding consistently to dealers' changing needs.

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603-659-3313
800-448-0012 National

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compete. But don't sell it if *you* are not sold on it, because customers pick up on sales pitches that don't ring true. "It works extremely well and we never have any problems, it's the top-of-the-line. The best you can buy . . . I hope."

Antennas also have features. How many of those cheap antennas are going to be around five years from now? How many will work for Ku-band? For 2 degree spacing? How many will maintain their parabolic shape? How many manufacturers will be around to honor their lifetime warranty? Sell the mount as well as the parabolic. Sell the manufacturing process and the materials used to build the dish.

A Confidence Game

When you get into selling quality you get into a version of a confidence game. Not a confidence game to bilk your customer, but one that uses confidence to sell the product. When you can stand there and tell your customer that you feel this is product made with high standards and careful workmanship and believe it yourself, success will follow. Don't be apologetic about the price. Be positive. "This merchandise is worth every penny."

Quality systems are not complete without quality installations. It's the little things that count. Point out that you provide a ground rod and block, that you bury the cable in conduit, that you use cement. Explain that you take care of the system after the sale and that it costs money to do so. Zero in on the fact that you send in the warranty cards. Point out that you gently replace the sod that was dug up. People don't mind spending a little more money if they feel that they are getting their money's worth.

Maybe I feel comfortable about being able to ask $3500.00 for a system because my family has been in the car business for over thirty-five years and I have seen my share of $26,000.00 Lincolns sold. However, in recent times I also have seen a tremendous erosion in the profit margin on a $14,000.00 car or pick-up. Everywhere you look someone is discounting the price. But there are whispers that the trend is slowly moving towards getting the full price for the vehicle. The discounters are going out of business. They have found that they can't continue in business while making a 5% profit margin.

The point is, hold your line on the profit margin with upper end equipment. Remember, you only have to sell one of those to make what you make on two or three of the cheap systems. And you will probably have fewer service calls.

Now, let's see, if I sell one hundred of those at $450.00 profit, take that and multiply it by . . .

Quality systems require quality installations. Explaining the steps required to do a professional job and the care you take in doing those steps will make a buyer feel he is getting his money's worth.

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ESP INC.
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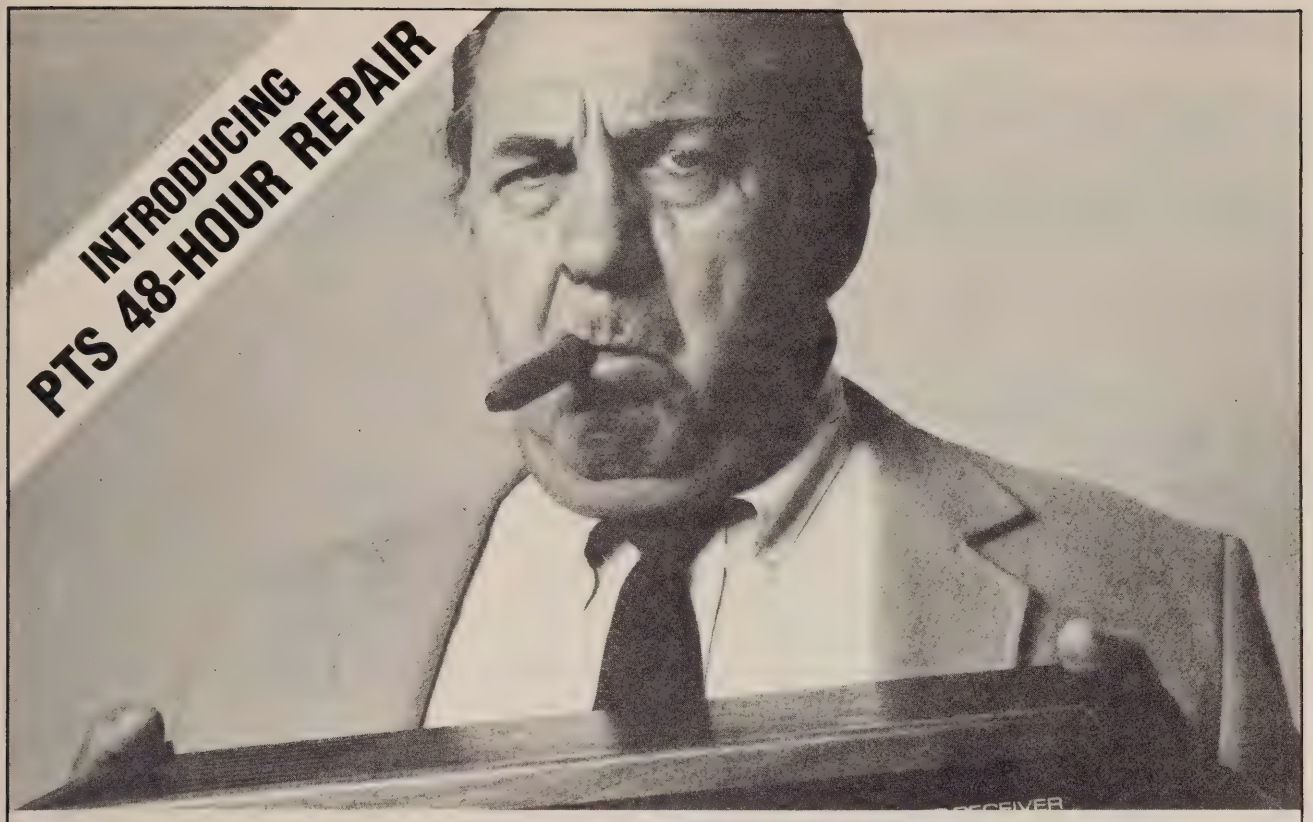

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PTS is the world's largest independent electronics rebuilder. PTS rebuilds components and equipment for the world's leading electronics manufacturers, CATV/MATV/SMATV systems, and over 50,000 television service dealers.

Your TVRO system receives:

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All Makes/All Models
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Actuator only $34.95*
Actuator Arm only $34.95*
***plus major parts and shipping**
(When shipping receiver, please include downconverter for proper calibration.)

Ship your receiver, downconverter, actuator, or actuator arm direct to PTS for fast, quality repair. For more information or the name of the Nationwide PTS Servicenter nearest you, write PTS Corporation, P.O. Box 272, Bloomington, Indiana 47402. Or get started today by calling 812-824-9331.

PTS SERVICE STAR

PTS 48 HOUR TVRO REPAIR SERVICE

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Search

(Continued from page 16)

product, Channel Master's dealers and distributor chain will have a Videocipher II descrambler. Mini cable operators, the larger MSO's anyway can buy these whether they buy them from us or whether they buy them from a distributor it doesn't matter. It's still another local outlet, another source.

"Right now a dealer either gets a descrambler through a M/A-Com distributor or Channel Master distributor — a satellite TVRO dealer does. A cable TV operator doesn't have to buy from us, he could buy a Channel Master unit if he thought he was getting a better deal from them. Or, he could make friends with a dealer and say he will take the order for the programming and he'll refer people to the local satellite dealer to get their hardware. We're beginning to see some of those cooperations coming in even if they are strange bedfellows."

Lindquist said the process of sending out information is equivalent to the product distribution method . . . and it could slow down the procedure of dealers getting all the information they need. "If you understand our two-step distribution process, M/A-Com deals with about 38 to 40 major distributors around the country and we gear all of our training and all of our product literature — everything to these distributors. Then, they turnaround and educate the dealers. The way the system works, we don't even know the names and addresses of the dealers. The distributors are very protective of that.

"Right now, we've putting together training materials and lists of compatible receivers and phone numbers of the programmers in order to get the box authorized and things like that. Most of our training is going to be just answering consumer questions like — How does the box work? Does it pick up all the different satellite channels? Will I ever need a second box? As far as the technical guts of the box, it's got a full twelve month warranty on it and we're really saying if people have problems, the box comes back to M/A-Com for repairs. So, we don't really have to train dealers how to fix them."

At the time of this writing, M/A-Com was negotiating with several national service organizations, one of which would handle regionalized service repair of the Videocipher II after the warranty period.

The rush to have descramblers in the hands of dealers has led to another chase — getting dealers enough information so they know what they need, how it works and how much it costs.

M/A-Com was also compiling a list of the most frequently asked consumer questions to put into a manual for dealer use. "We'll pass out a list of typical, basic questions to the dealers so they can use them and for internal use also."

The flow of information should help apprise what Lindquist calls a "very poorly informed" dealer sector. "This is one of our biggest faults. We go out and just drop in on satellite dealers and go in and ask questions about scrambling to see what kind of answers we'll get. There is so much misinformation and confusing floating around about this that we're trying to do some educating. We have even found this in Congress in Washington — there's just a lot of misinformation floating around."

Don Doney, vice president of sales and marketing for Satellite Video Services, a New York-based distributor, agreed the descrambler information stops somewhere short of the dealer. But for SVS, a M/A-Com distributor, Doney said the situation is different. "We are all very well informed as to what is going on because we have an avenue to the information as it comes, there is no restrictive flow for us. We know that we will be getting the Videocipher II within the next two weeks (by the end of December), and we plan on selling them. We get requests for them everyday."

Doney said SVS was in the process of putting together a pamphlet that will help the dealer answer consumer questions. "The situation for the dealer is desperate, there's no question about it because right now they don't know anything. It's difficult to disseminate that information down through the ranks because it takes a lot of wind and a lot of talk. I just wrote some dealers a letter and explained to them what the situation was and how they're going to be able to be supplied with the units and where they're going to get them from. Okay, that's fine, that's 25 dealers who got a letter — a handful. Next week, maybe I'll get out another 25. The point is it's a long and drawn out process, so the dealers are desperate.

"We're going to put together pamphlets and flyers so that our dealers do become well informed. We're also having another pamphlet designed for the consumer. So, when a customer comes into a store and asks about scrambling, the dealer doesn't have to flinch.

Further down the ladder, the lack of information is much worse, Doney said. "The consumers know absolutely nothing. First of all, half of them don't even know what a satellite dish is and when they find out what a dish is they hear through HBO or one of the cable operators that dishes are illegal and everything is going to be scrambled. That's just misinformation and it's going to take a concerted effort to bring awareness levels up."

But Donald Berg, vice president of Channel Master which will market the Videocipher II under its own label, said a rush for

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information and descrambler units is premature. "I think it's definitely premature at the moment," Berg said. "HBO is running ads in our magazines saying call your local satellite dealer for more information. Effectively though, there is really no market yet because only HBO and Cinemax are scrambled. So really, there is no great demand at the moment. Next month, when we receive our shipment of decoders, we expect to notify all of our distributors and dealers to all they need to market the service although we don't expect the demand to be substantial until summertime at the earliest."

Doney disagrees. "I think there will be an immediate demand. I don't think the demand will be super at first. I feel that it will actually feed off of whether of not the other programmers scramble, and I think they will once some of the descramblers are in place."

However, Doney said certain factors, like the number of programmers who decide to scramble in the near future and how customers perceive descramblers could dramatically affect early sales. "Many people may choose not to buy because they feel they will either be able to purchase units cheaper in the future or that the descrambler will be built directly into the receiver or even that it will be built better in the future."

Regardless of what the demand was at the outset, Lindquist said M/A-Com was committed to having 25,000 units into the pipelines by January 15. "We're pretty confident that it's a numbers game and this is the tricky part of it. I'm telling you that we will have more than enough descramblers to meet what we anticipate the demand will be and HBO has made some predictions on how many they think will be signed up."

Although Lindquist would not specify what that number is expected to be, he said the problem was in deciding where and how much the demand would be. "It's logistics, let's say we have 20,000 in the distribution line and there are only 500 customers — well it would seem to me that we certainly have more than enough product out there. But, what if in Idaho there are 40 customers and only 30 units in stock. Yet, we have 1,000 in stock in New York and only 25 customers. This is where I think we're playing a numbers game. We will have plenty of units out by the fifteenth but whether we will actually have one at every little local dealer in Kansas or Idaho or New Mexico — that's something we really can't cover unless we had one unit at every single satellite dealer across the whole country."

Demand for descramblers, Lindquist said, would be the most important factor in M/A-Com's marketing strategy. "I think it's going to be a pull through marketing. We really think the demand is going to pull the product through the distribution chain so quickly, it's really going to be, if you've got the inventoy, it's going to move. You're not going to have to go out and do a lot of selling."

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Galaxy Satellite's Owen Speaks Out On TVRO Issues

With heavy print media coverage as well as utilizing door-hangers, Galaxy depends on an extensive advertising campaign to draw customers. Owen spends an average of $200 in advertising for every system he sells.

By William Gunn

Over in the great Northwest, situated between California's glamour and laid-back atmosphere and the right-hand corner state, Washington, is Oregon. Now Oregon is a state you don't hear much about. It's universities and pro sports teams never bring it any spotlight, it's a beautiful state but it rains all the time, and I doubt you'll even be able to see Halley's comet from Oregon.

But one thing this state does have (besides Portland) is one excellent TVRO dealership — Galaxy Satellite the oldest and largest (and probably the most successful) retail satellite store in the Northwest.

Galaxy popped up a little over two years ago in Portland, Oregon's largest city. At the same time of the opening of the original location, Ralph Owen, owner and founder of Galaxy, was unveiling another location on Oregon's coast. Owen has since added another store in the metro-Portland area and has plans for a new store in the Washington state area.

Although he's only been selling retail satellite equipment for two years, speaking with him, you get the idea Owen is a veteran of the industry . . . and actually, he is. In 1980, right around the time systems were selling at $7,000 to $10,000 a clip and LNAs were a mere $1,500, Owen was getting his start in the industry. "I got involved selling satellite equipment around 1980. I had another company that we wholesaled video equipment and we also started wholesaling satellite equipment. The market place wasn't ready then because of the prices of the equipment. Also, for a year I had a wholesale company called Cable Vision where we did commercial installs for hotels and motels, and then we dove into retail. So actually, I've been in the business for three years, but I've been involved in the sales and marketing of electronic equipment for about 10 years."

Before the late season scrambling crunch hit, Owen said his total crew of 12 installers at the three Galaxy locations were putting in an average of 100 to 120 systems a month. That number has been reduced to about half now and although Owen has even had to lay off some of his workers, he sees the sales slump as a transitory situation brought about by customer uncertainty.

"Sure I think the situation is going to change. The people who have dishes aren't worried about scrambling, at least I don't think my customers are. Other people who want to buy a dish still come in and buy them because they understand the proposed threat of scrambling. However, there are an awful lot of people out there who won't take the second step and come into the store because they've got this over riding image of the skys going dark. They're listening to all that garbage the cable companies are putting out."

As you might have guessed, Owen is a fairly opinionated man. But with installations somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,300 systems, three retail locations (all of which are making a profit), an extensive advertising budget and the largest inventory of any dealer in the Northwest (Owen calls Galaxy "the oldest, the largest, with the mostest"), you get the feeling he knows of what he speaks.

Owen's views range from his firm stand on marketing strategies to his thoughts on descramblers. Incidentally, his convictions on his home state differ considerably from what was previously written. Owen states Oregon is actually a pretty nice place (and this writer certainly cannot disagree, I have never been to the Beaver State). Owen said Oregon is a hotbed for satellite television.

"It was the same way with the video industry. We have more video stores than any other place. It's got

a firm stronghold here because there was no cable out in this area. Oregon and Washington were pretty much the same and then we got an awful lot of video stores here. The same thing has happened with satellite television. Some of the largest dish manufacturers got their start here in Oregon."

So much for my thoughts on Oregon. Other than a loyalty to his state, Owen has some other interesting theories as well as a few judgments on certain areas of the industry worth mentioning.

Owen On Advertising

Owen said Galaxy competes head-to-head for customers with the cable companies since a high percentage of the metro-Portland area is cabled. He attributes his success to a strong advertising plan. "We have always been very aggressive in promotions and in advertising. We spend an average of $200 on each system that goes out of here just on advertising. Our average systems have been selling at about $2,200. So, a good portion of our margins are thrown into advertising, but we feel the only way to sell satellite television is to present it to people, to explain to them what it's all about, and that costs money. We feel our success is directly related to the amount of advertising and the way we advertise."

And the way Owen advertises, like many dealers, is through the print media. "We have found television not to be too effective, radio not to be too effective, most of our advertising falls into cable guides, television sections, T.V. guides and newspapers in the television section. We just basically go right after the television sections in the major newspaper and print media."

At least one of Owens advertising promotions has stirred up trouble. Tangling head-on with cable companies has inspired Owen to promote his wares in local cable guides — an idea the cable companies weren't too fond of. In fact, the notion made such an impression on them, they refused to let Galaxy advertise. "We wanted to advertise because, of course, we felt it was a good idea, and they refused to let us at first. They said we could not do it. I threatened to take them to court, and they ended up letting us do it. So, when people flipped through their cable guides at home, they would end up seeing our advertisement."

Another approach that has proven to be an effective advertising tool in Galaxy's urban market radius is door hangings. "We have done quite a bit with direct door-hangers and it has been extremely effective. We'll go out and put 10,000 or 20,000 hangers in a certain area, and it brings the people into the

Ralph Owen, owner of Galaxy Satellite.

A sophisticated showroom entices buyers.

Galaxy's showroom features the largest selection in the Northwest.

store. Our whole approach is we don't sell price, we sell as much information as can. Now, if we have a little dealer down the street who is beating us on price, we're not going to be under sold. But, it's our attitude that 80 percent of the market place makes its decision based on the dealer, not on price. So why should we lower our price for 20 percent of the market?"

. . . On Marketing

With three retail locations and a fourth planned for the future, you have to believe Owen has formulated a pretty durable marketing plan. But Owen's design is simple — image and information, he said, are the two cornerstones of his strategy.

Galaxy's showroom is designed with an eye toward customer attraction. Owen said the room has over 15 antennas on display as well as over 20 receivers. And the displays aren't just space-fillers set haphazardly around the room, they are there for the customer — to attract and to invite a sale. Of course, image along can't sell anything, Owen credits that to his sales team's product knowledge.

"Once the customers are in the showroom, we run them through a video presentation and load them up with all sorts of literature and information to go home and evaluate. There are a lot of smaller dealers giving stuff away, making $300 a system, and that's what we have to compete with. But we feel our customers like our approach of providing them with lots of information. Subsequently, they buy from us because they feel confident."

Owen said providing information is one of the strongest possible selling aids because customers shopping for TVRO equipment are at a disadvantage. "The customer in this industry has got some problems. He has no way, no consumer reports to go to, he has no place to really compare brand names. Customers make their buying decisions based on the dealer and the image the dealer portrays. Our image is a large selection, a good service department, technically we know what we're talking about and we give them lots of information. We're on their side to help them make the best decision that's going to fit their needs. That's why we've done so well."

Does that sound like a good idea? It is. Galaxy estimates 30 to 40 percent of the customers who walk through the door, come through referrals. "We give away a free subscription to a programming guide to anyone who refers someone in here. We tell everyone that and no one has taken us up on it, but we still get tons of referrals. We also call and contact all of our customers after they've had their systems in for a couple of months to see if they're happy and satisfied and to ask for referrals. We have been extremely successful with it."

Galaxy carries an extensive line of equipment, of course. The hitch in that is Owen said the majority of the inventory is for show. "We carry an extensive selection, and we do have a lot of pieces, but when it's all said and done, there are probably only four receivers that we sell 90 percent of the time, and two dishes that we sell 90 percent of the time. The other portion is for image. In other words, we want to look like the experts. Our line is — the North-

(continued on page 73)

A row of antennas marks the storefront at one of Galaxy's three locations.

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HBO Says Private Owners Are Not Scrambling Cause

By John Brannon

With HBO scrambling, new light is being shed on the real concerns and plans of HBO and cable operators.

HBO now says it has absolutely no concern about dish owners, but only wants to make commercial pirates like bars and motels walk the plank.

And, as HBO leases major space to move to Ku-band, *Satellite TV Opportunities* has learned the movie service plans to limit its Ku-band service as the exclusive sales turf of cable owners.

In other words, only cable operators will be allowed to sell HBO Ku-signals. C-band TVRO dealers apparently may not be allowed to see Ku- in rural America.

If this holds at HBO, some industry observers, including Dr. Ed Meek, publisher of this magazine and *Ku-band World* are asking if the limiting of Ku- to cable is an anti-trust violation, and should be investigated by the (U.S. Congressman Billy) Tauzin committee.

Here's the view.

The guys in the black hats were hotels, restaurants and bars that illegally used satellite TV programming to generate business profits.

The guys in the white hats were satellite earth station owners who watched HBO and Cinemax in the privacy of their homes. Nobody really cared about them.

Because of the black hat crowd, Home Box Office, Inc., turned to scrambling as an "electronic answer" rather than file a multitude of lawsuits.

Also because of the black hats, the white hats must suffer now that scrambling full-time has become a reality.

When HBO expands its satellite-delivered TV programming to the Ku-band, neither the black hats nor the white hats will be invited to the party. Apparently, this show is intended only for the cable crowd, the guys wearing the gray hats.

Those insights into Home Box Office corporate thinking were disclosed recently during an interview between *Satellite TV Opportunities Magazine* and Allen Levy and Lynn Herlinger, managers of corporate public relations, HBO.

"It is now clear that the real game for HBO and cable operators is to control the future of Ku which will be much larger than the C-band market. The very idea of limiting Ku signal sales to cabled areas is clearly not in the public interest of half of the population of this country which is located outside cabled areas. Ku will mean smaller and less expensive antennas and that means more people will be able to afford satellite TV. To limit this option to cabled areas is in our judgement a violation of the spirit of the Communications Act and equal and fair access. We certainly intend to ask Congressman Tauzin to look into this and ask SPACE to oppose any limits on the development of Ku," Dr. Ed Meek said.

And the New York thinkers still say there's no need for congressional legislation to regulate satellite TV scramlbing of programming.

"You've got to bear in mind that we're not scrambling to knock out an individual who has a dish," Levy said. "We're scrambling because there are hotels, restaurants and bars across the country that received our signals and then made commercial use of them. Like a hotel places an ad, 'We've got the softest bed in town and free HBO in your room.' Rather than sue them, we have an electronic answer: to scramble. It's those people who are pirates. We don't think that an individual who owns an earth station and watches in his living room, and who's not selling any tickets, is a pirate. However, that person is affected by the scrambling project. We understand that. So we didn't have a problem with them (homeowners) watching unscrambled programming.

"We're status quo with C-band, and the ways things are looking now, there's Showtime, The Movie Channel and others committed to M/A-Com, and coming to one descrambler. We always thought the marketplace would evolve so the dish owner would be able to get all the scrambled services through one box. We think that's happening.

"We understand that if you're a dish owner and you put down $4,000 and you've got that hardware in your backyard and you don't know what you're going to be able to get, you get very nervous. And some people look toward that legislation that's pending on the Hill to do the trick. But on the other hand, for years now the trend in Washington has been toward deregulating. Washington is keeping its eye on the situation, but

(Continued on page 112)

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TVRO buyers at a Best Value Satellites outlet choose from a variety of systems.

From Phones to Satellites, Graceba Systems Prosper

by Beth Shaw

It's a story of supply meeting demand and the growth of the satellite industry from its very beginning — that's how Best Value Satellites has grown from an idea to something very real, a trademark.

Best Value Satellites is made up of 10 independently-owned satellite system retail stores in Alabama, Georgia and Florida. Working under a consignment agreement using the Best Value Satellites name and inventory demonstration units, these independent retailers have found a solution they think answers any problems for those who want a variety of television entertainment, but live in rural areas where cable doesn't reach.

Graceba Systems Company, which began as a rural phone company more than 70 years ago, owns the Best Value Satellites trademark. And according to president Steve Clark, the key to its success has been understanding the needs of a rural area.

"Everything goes back to the phone company," Clark said. "Graceba started as a company in the rural communications business. When you have a rural phone company, it means that there are about 7,000 people in a rural area, and most of them have no television other than local VHF stations. There was a demand in our area for satellite systems and six years ago, we started meeting those demands."

Graceba Systems Company, more than 70 years old, has been in the same business all along — rural communications. Originated as a phone company, today Graceba also encompasses Best Value Satellites, a string of 10 TVRO retail stores.

Clark said that the first antenna was sold in 1979 and "we've been in the satellite business ever since."

Developed Out Of Necessity

Clark said Best Value Satellites was developed about a year ago by retail store owners who banded together "pretty much out necessity."

"As a group of retailers, we can volume purchase and advertise and the consumer in the South likes the fact that he has 10 locations in his area he can be served from," Clark said. "The big benefit of the group is that we use a uniform method of equipment sales and service.

"One of the hallmarks of our company is that when you walk into a Best Value Satellites store, you'll see a minimum of six complete systems, all on different channels, playing on television screens," he said. "These demos stay in the stores at all times. We believe that the customer, when he comes into the retail store, wants to see a variety of systems operating so he can compare them and get the best buy for

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his dollar and choose a system that will best suit his needs."

Clark said that Best Value Satellites is very much concerned with the consumer in the satellite industry. "As far as getting a system that will be worth the money he pays for it, there are so many retailers in this industry who are either in the business for a very short time or who are not strictly dedicated to the industry as a specialty store would be. Best Value Satellites stores are specialty stores within businesses and therefore they can give the consumer the very best information on what type of satellite that individual might need for his home, and at the same time, give him a wide variety and selection."

Clark said that even though volume purchasing allows for a price reduction, Best Value Satellites doesn't necessarily compete with prices. "We would rather simply compete on the benefits of the equipment to the buyer. Our stores do get a reduced price, but we do not market on price, but rather on quality of equipment and service and repeat service."

That service is an important part of Best Value Satellites, Clark said. "We think that the service part of the satellite industry will be better and better for those companies that can manage their service departments and will actively seek the consumers' business. We would like for consumers to come into Best Value Satellites stores for service contracts on equipment no matter where the equipment was bought.

"We really are a consumer-oriented company in that we are used to dealing with people in their homes."

Clark said Graceba carefully screens prospective retailers but that many don't meet the criteria for consumer service. "We think that there will be a shake out within the industry this year. The people who have sold quality equipment and serviced that equipment, those people will increase their market share because there will be a lot of smaller companies and larger companies that have not serviced the market. They are the ones who will have difficult times," Clark said.

Each Best Value Satellite store has a service center the consumer can go to for service for satellite equipment no matter what it may be. "Best Value Satellite stores have a technical staff who go to each store to do new product training and service updates to work with each store owner on the equipment," he said. "We think that the market has never been stronger for satellite equipment."

Clark also said the old nemesis of scrambling is a concern of consumers "about 90 percent of the time." He said the store owners simply tell the consumers pay-for-view television channels may indeed be scrambled, but that there are hundreds of other channels that won't be.

"I think that this is an opportunity for every satellite retailer to re-identify with the consumer base out there," Clark said. "There will be a lot of satellite companies in the market and retailing programming services will be a really big opportunity for those very stable, solid satellite companies to make additional subscription income."

Clark said his satellite business is growing so that General Electric Credit Corporation has negotiated with Best Value Satellites to have a credit card for the satellite consumer. "A lot of customers would like to invest in satellite systems over time and this type of consumer credit card will allow that qualified buyer to come in and pay for his satellite system the way he would want. We think that the credit is loosening up for satellites systems as these corporations realize how good an investment satellites really are."

Clark summed the marketing philosophy of Best Value Satellites as "centering around the customers' needs and serving them.

"The people in the satellite business have a real opportunity to be long-term speciality stores if they center around the customer, his needs and demands."

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Galaxy

(continued from page 64)

west's oldest and largest satellite specialists. That's what we push, being the satellite specialists. When people come in here, they want to see a lot. They want to feel comfortable that they are going to purchase something that won't be an oddball. They want to feel like they've done a good job of shopping.

. . . On Cable Companies

"The customers who come in here think the cable company is the enemy," Owen said. "It's not, but the customer perceives that. I had lots of customers come in last summer and actually buy a satellite dish not because they wanted a satellite dish, but because they wanted to get even with the cable company. They bought a satellite dish because they were tired of dealing with them on the phone and being mistreated and billing and all that goes along with that.

"The cable companies ought to call the phone companies to learn how to deal with people, people used to complain about the phone company. The phone company is fantastic compared to the cable company though."

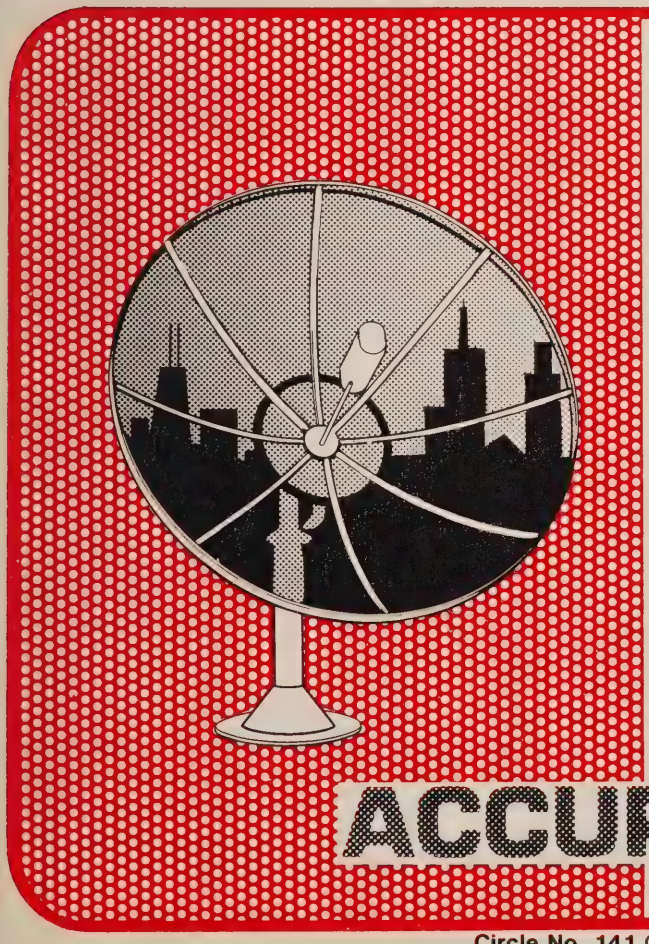
Owen believes cable is in trouble, that it is being outmoded by newer, more convenient technologies. "Cable is dead, interim technology and the cable companies are not making any money. They aren't expanding, and they're not a service company anymore. They're just trying to pay off a loan, the cost of putting in all these millions of miles worth of cable. So, all they're trying to do right now is hold the status quo and they're not holding it."

. . . On Ku-band

Galaxy, Owen said, was the first dealership in the Northwest to carry ku-compatible equipment. The future of the stronger band could be virtually limitless, he said, and dual-band equipment is already a selling point. "All of the sudden there is this huge interest in ku-band. It's surprising. The attraction, of course, is more channels. But I think why the consumers are actually buying it is they don't want to get a system that will quickly become outmoded. People are scared of outmoded technology.

"I think when people buy a satellite system, they are scared and our job is to take that fear away from them. We're just glorified order takers — they want a system. What we have to do is to get rid of the fears. Everybody wants more programming, who would tell you they didn't. We take the attitude that we are the experts. We just give them the facts. They have to decide from there."

Ralph Owen has parlayed his electronics interest into a chain of three retail stores in Oregon with total installations numbering over 2,300.



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Pinpointing Weaknesses Can Spur Sales Success

By Tim Connor

There are a number of reasons why people fail. There are probably as many reasons why people fail as there are people who have failed. I realize you might think that this is not a very profound statement, but the reasons individuals fail are individual reasons. In this article I will cover the major reasons why people fail in sales. I believe that in order to establish good habits — good selling habits — we need to know not only our strengths, but our weaknesses too. The following list represents why most people fail in sales. Carefully analyze yourself in each area.

Poor Planning: It is amazing how little salespeople plan their activities, their days, their sales calls, or their lives. They will travel halfway across town and waste three hours to get to a poorly qualified prospect, and in the meantime, pass dozens of prospects within walking distance of their home or office. Or they will enter into a sales situation not having given the prospect or the sales call adequate thought, preparation, or planning.

Ask yourself, "On Friday, do I know what I will be doing every day next week, or do I wait until Monday to decide what I will do on Monday? When I crawl into bed on Tuesday night, do I know exactly what I will be doing on Wednesday, or do I wait until I get to the office on Wednesday to determine what I will do on Wednesday?"

Planning is an important part of your success in the sales profession — planning your time, planning your calls, and planning all of your selling activities. Most of the successful salespeople I have known spend more time in pre-call preparation and planning than they do in the actual sales session or interview. Most of the losers that I have known in sales, spend most of their time in sales interviews and very little time in sales planning.

Poor Attitude: People fail in sales continuously because they cannot control their own attitudes. What do I mean by controlling your attitude? Let me give you an illustration. You have just finished your fourth sales call of the day, your fourth rejection of the day; it is 3:00 P.M. and you have an appointment at 3:30. If you're a pro, you enter into that situation with the same positive attitude you did your first appointment of the day.

Very few people have that kind of control. You must separate each sales call, each sales event, each rejection, and think of it in separate terms. Your ability to control your attitude on a daily basis is proof of your success in this profession. You need to train your mind to react to the negatives — the problems, the criticisms, the failures — no differently than you would the successes in your sales day.

Lack of Continuous Training: Nearly 200 years ago during the administration of President Adams, the U.S. Patent Office came within three votes of being closed because officials thought everything worthwhile had been invented! One of the problems with people today, especially salespeople, is that they have closed their patent offices. Some rather interesting research I have read recently indicates the average individual invests several hundred dollars per year on the outside of his or her head and body to improve appearance — haircuts, shaving cream, perfume, makeup and clothes. The same average individual spends several thousand dollars for an automobile, plus at least $20 — $30 more per week for gas to get them to and from prospects offices or homes. Let's summarize. If you're like the average individual just mentioned, you have invested, at this point, several thousand dollars to make you look good, smell good, and get you in front of your prospects. My question to you is, "What did you invest last year on the inside of your head so you would know what to say when you got there?"

Most of the people who need sales training today, don't take it. Their attitude is, "I took the Dale Carnegie course 15 years ago, read a sales book ten years ago, and bought a cassette one time — there's nothing new. I'm not going to hear anything from this individual that I haven't heard." Most of the people through the years who have attended my classes have not been the losers in sales, but the winners. It's been my experience that the people who need training never take it. The people who are successful are successful primarily because of their attitude toward self-improvement. They are always buying books, attending seminars, taking courses, listening to cassettes, and attending meetings to improve themselves.

Poor Use Of Time: You and I got up this morning with one common denominator in our journey toward success. We were both given 24 hours. Whether you are 20, 30 or 50 years old, you have had the same amount of time to become successful or unsuccessful as your neighbor or associates of equal age. The key to success is not how much time you have, but how you use your time each day.

It has been my experience that people in sales who regularly abuse their time seldom accomplish much for themselves, their families, or their clients. The successful salespeople are time-conscious. They realize that every minute of the day is a potential for income. They think creatively, they sell creatively, they improve themselves creatively, they even dream creatively through the skills of auto-suggestion and visualization.

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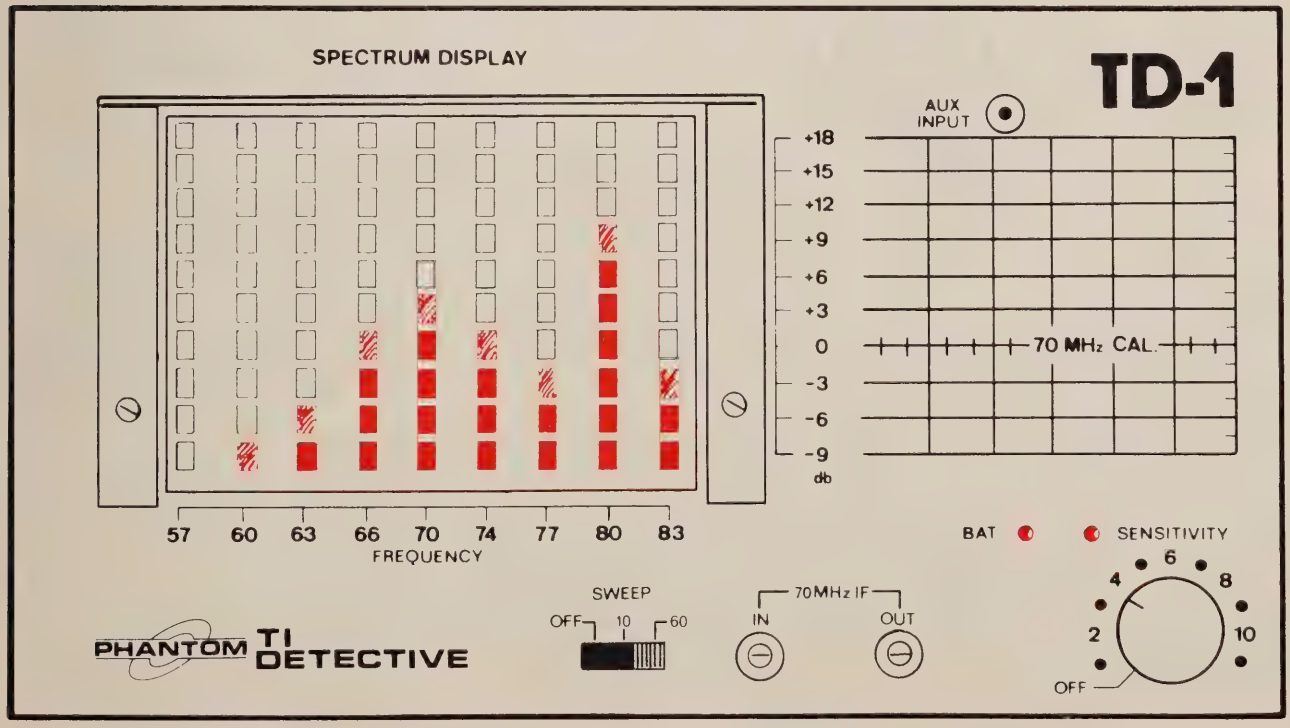

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going, that's probably the reason you're not getting there. But if you do have a clear-cut specific plan for success for your life, then you probably are achieving your objective fairly near the schedule you have set for yourself. One of the differences between successful people and unsuccessful people is their purpose in life — their goals. Half of our success is going to be determined by our goals, and the other half by our action. The lack of goals will determine the lack of our success.

Lack Of Self-Discipline: Self-discipline is an integral quality that gets you to do things long after the commitment, the enthusiasm, or the decision to do those things has past. For example, let's say that after reading this article you decide to make a sincere effort to evaluate and improve your sales performance, but four weeks from now you are no longer doing what you said you would do. Instead you did it for only a short time because the momentum, the decision, the enthusiasm surrounding the decision was immediate. Self-discipline gets you to continue to do the things you said you would do long after that initial commitment or that enthusiasm has gone.

Procrastination: Do you have the habit of procrastination? Can you carry the enthusiasm, commitment, and dedication and action into both pleasant and unpleasant tasks?

If you don't act or make a decision, you know the outcome. Nothing will change; it will be as it is. But if you make a new decision — take on an unpleasant or unknown direction — fear develops. Procrastination is fear of the unknown. If you have a fear, do the thing you fear and you will overcome your fear.

Lack of Concentration: You must be able to focus 100 percent of your attention on your prospect. I don't care if you have marital, financial or personal problems. You must force them out of your mind while trying to sell. The prospect should be the center of your world and deserves your best at all times.

Neglecting Self-Evaluation Or Appraisal: Why is it that people who need self-evaluation the most never seem to use it? The winners in sales constantly ask their customers, prospects, managers, associates, or spouses, "What can I do to improve?" They are not afraid of criticism; they encourage it.

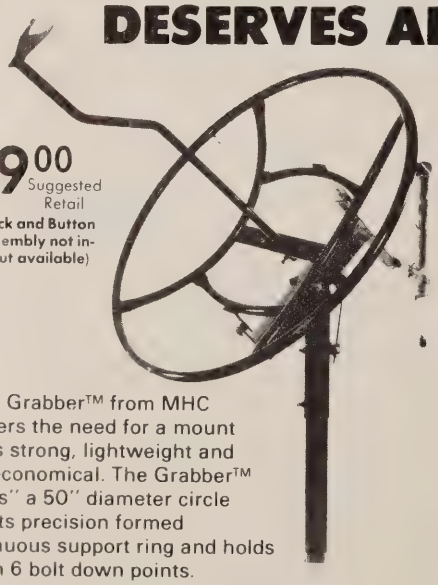
Inability To Cope With Rejection: This is the major cause of failure in sales. We'll discuss this problem in greater detail later in a future article.

Inability To Fail: Sales is a failing business. Invariably, if you are seeing enough people and making enough calls, you will have a high percentage of failures. What will determine your success in sales more than any other fact is your ability to fail successfully and keep trying, learning and improving.

Lack Of Creative Imagination: Are you still trying to sell the way you did last year? Are you selling each prospect the same? Do you sell the same every day? If your success depended on your creative approach to each new prospect each day, how would you be doing?

The faults in this list are the major causes of failure in sales. How did you fare? In a future article we will discuss the ingredients found in the most successful people.

ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER. . .



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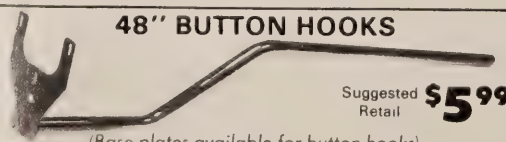

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About The Author:

Tim Connor is a nationally recognized sales trainer, professional speaker, seminar leader and author. He is an active member of the National Speaker's Association. This material was taken from his best selling book, "The Soft Sell." He has also produced several cassettes and cassette programs on self-improvement skills, sales skills and sales management skills. For further information on his sales training materials, books, cassettes or his speaking services, write or call him personally — T R Associates, P.O. Box 207, Dallas, Pa. 18612, 717-675-4467

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TVRO Trivia Games

(Continued from page 32)

no tests to back that up, but we do know professionals and commercial people keep their antennas clean. All transmittors and receivers of commercial signals know that clean dishes make a major difference in their picture quality."

The emergence of the mesh antenna has alerted Skalla to still another problem home earth station owners face in the care of their antennas — rust. "Of course, the problem with mesh dishes is that they rust — if the paint chips off in even a small place, it begins to rust. So we have a mild cleaner that won't hurt the finish. The customer can clean with that and then come back with a material we have called 'rust eater.'

"The rust eater is actually a coal phosphate coating. It takes iron oxide and chemically converts it to iron phosphate. Iron phosphate is an excellent primer base for paint — all commercial people, even automobile manufacturers, will tell you that. You just can't paint over raw metal, you have to do something to it, and phosphate coating has been recognized over the years as the best primer base for paint. So, by using the rust eater, you make the paint adhere better and you stop corroding where rust creeps under the paint."

S & S has developed two kits — one for mesh and the other for fiberglass antennas. All kits contain a four- to eight-foot aluminum telescoping handle, a flag-nylon brush, a bottle of either mesh or fiberglass antenna cleaner, rust eater (Skalla said S & S puts rust eater in both kits because the metal pieces on fiberglass antennas tend to rust also) and a pint of rust protector.

Sales for the two kits have been almost even, Skalla said. "The fiberglass kit sold better at first, but they've evened out now. We're currently trying to change our market strategy with the mesh kit and promote the rust eater a little stronger. Possibly later we will even have the rust eater available separately because it's a major problem."

Instead of using the traditional system of going through TVRO retail outlets, Skalla said S & S has had more success with direct mail. "We market the Dish Maid some through dealers but it seems the best way for us, by far, is through direct mail. Dealers should be interested in this and sell it as a kit, but they aren't. This industry is still quite in its infancy, and dealers aren't well established. They're here today and gone tomorrow. I think the average dealer is stretched thin and he doesn't want to spend any extra capital if he doesn't have to. We have had some dealers and distributors do a very good job for us, but we've more or less sold direct. Actually, we'd like to stop selling direct and go through dealers, but I think whichever we do we'll be all right because we've got a product that the end-user needs and wants."

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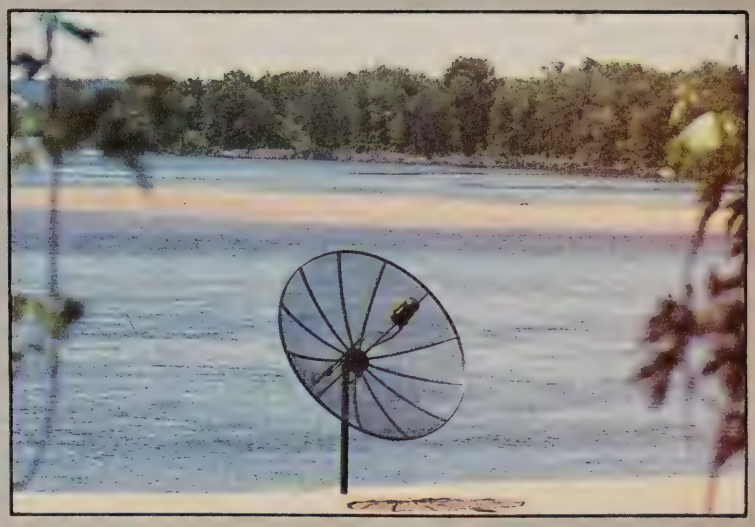

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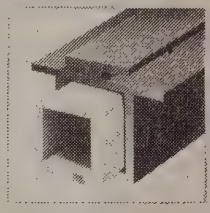

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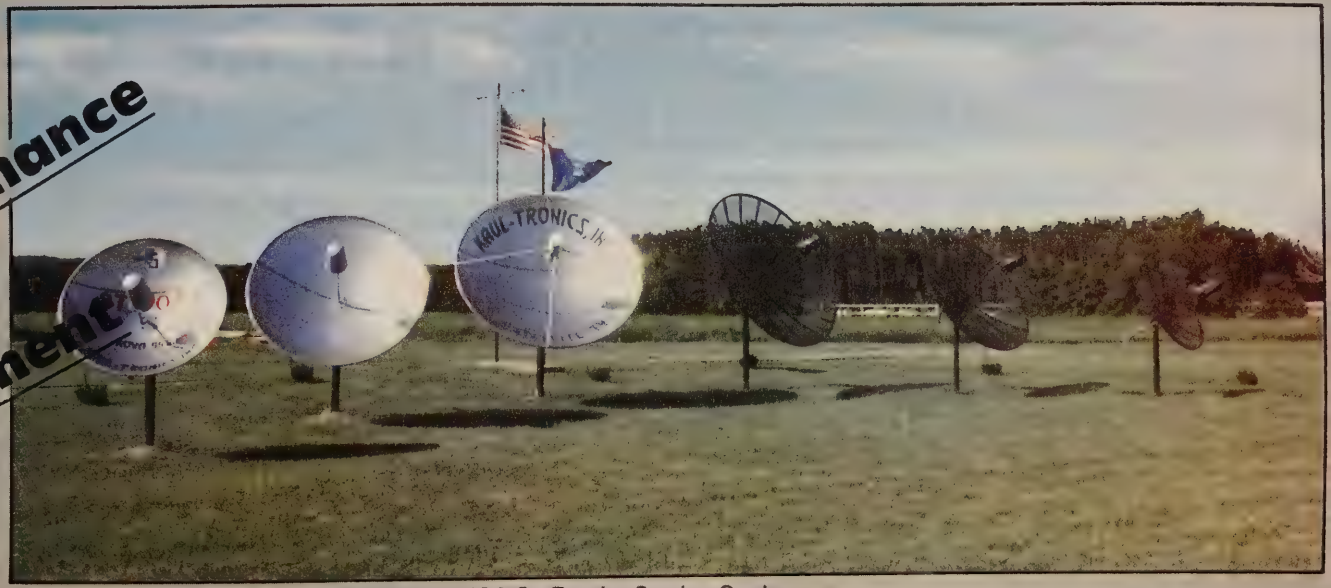

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Dealers Remember 1985 As Fruitful But Confusing

By Kelley Hennessey

1985 seems to have been a successful year for TVRO dealers on the whole. Despite facing year-ending problems and the countless rumors of what scrambling might do to the industry, most of the dealers we talked with said the past year had met their expectations.

1985, which was hailed as a year when TVRO sales would sky rocket, started out in strong fashion. March saw the industry's trade show in Las Vegas attract a record turn out (only to be surpassed by the participation in Nashville in September). But by fall, sales had taken a definite downward plunge and the expected holiday boom failed to materialize in the face of the January 15 date which had been set for scrambling.

Ah, scrambling, now there's the rub. Scrambling seemed to be the main topic of everyone's conversation. There were so many questions and generally, so few answers. And the uncertainty took its toll as just about every business person in the industry felt the late-season crunch of sluggish sales. But finally, by the end of the year, dealers had found hope in the promise of M/A-Com as well as other manufacturers who said descramblers would be available at the beginning of the year.

Ku-band became a new possibility for dealers with it emergence. Many dealers say they will be looking toward the stronger band to give their sales a shot in the arm for 1986. From a business perspective, 1985 has been a successful year for TVRO dealers, and if scrambling issues are resolved in 1986, dealers say they expect the year to be equally as successful.

Byron, Ga. — "Sales were definitely better than 1984," said Linda Beck of A & L Satellite Systems.

Some unforeseen problems that Beck's company encountered were the higher failure rates in some electronics. "We have a sacrifice to meet demands though," Beck said.

"We keep a large stock and we test all of our equipment when it comes in while we are doing our inventory," Beck said. "We then send back those systems which come DOA that are faulty. We get the manufacturer to swap them out."

"If a customer has equipment that tears up within the first week or so, then we swap out their faulty equipment and replace it and send the other equipment back," Beck said.

Scrambling does not seem to affect Beck's sales. "We have done more business than our distributors," she said. "We sell anywhere from five to thirteen dishes a week, sixty to eighty each month."

Ku-band doesn't affect sales at A & L Satellite Systems either. "People around here have asked about it; they know it's coming but they don't really understand enough about it to let it affect their decision on buying a satellite system."

Even with the added uncertainties of scrambling, A & L Satellite Systems has still managed to have a excellent year. "We hope 1986 will be just as successful," Beck said. "We hope to give the consumers more of a choice of what will be available in 1986, and we want to broaden our availabilities to sell more retail items."

Alma, Ga. — According to Linton Carter, owner of Acme TV, 1985 was a good year in Georgia.

"I have averaged one sale a week and maybe more," Carter said. "We haven't really had any serious problems but nothing extraordinary has happened either."

Scrambling has had some impact, Carter said, because some people have been reading magazines that have contained articles concerning the scrambling issue.

Ku-band, though, has not had any impact on Carter's sales. "There is just not enough known about it at this point," Carter said. "Until there is a great deal of improvement made, it probably won't make a great impact on sales. There are certain limitations to Ku-band.

"It's like VHF was to UHF back in earlier years," Carter said. "Ku-band is going to try and make a comeback. The lack of success with it and the millions of dollars they pumped into it maybe will pay off one day, but right now it is only a possibility."

Overall Carter says his year has been very successful. "I stay busy with installations," he said. "There are a lot of loyal people here and they really believe in us. There have been a lot of fly-by-nighters that come in and sell systems at $100 above cost and they don't know a

(continued on page 104)

The past year saw a record amount of participation at trade shows, the emergence of ku-band as a distinct marketing possibility for 1986, the announcement to scramble by two programmers and overall, what dealers called a successful sales year.

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Triangle Engineering Pins TVRO Hopes On Tristar-10

By Jim Gray

Triangle Engineering Company of Arkansas has long experience manufacturing fans and ventilation equipment for home and commercial applications — about 40 years worth. The company began as a branch of Houston-based Triangle Engineering Company, and its fan products can be found in such retail outlets as Central Hardware and K-Mart.

Now add satellite antennas to the mix.

Triangle is not a late arrival in the TVRO industry. Their metal fabrication experience found a market manufacturing feed assemblies and buttonhooks for antenna makers around their Jacksonville, Ark. location, a few miles outside Little Rock. But its introduction to the industry came about not through manufacturing, but through the all important finishing touch of painting.

Triangle Engineering of Arkansas had all the capabilities it needed to build its own antenna, but manufacturing and painting for other antenna makers was steady and profitable business. Then, as market conditions began changing, they took another look.

"We started off in TVRO by painting antennas for one manufacturer exclusively," said Dale McKay, Triangle's national sales manager. "But our capacity far exceeded what this one manufacturer could produce, so we began painting for most of the Arkansas based companies. Then we were asked to produce a feed assembly, so we started selling literally tens of thousands of buttonhooks to the manufacturers in this area."

Manufacturing and painting for other companies were two procedures Triangle was well-equipped to do. Their painting system could meet any demands a manufacturer would make. It used a five stage rinse/wash and an iron phosphate surface preparation, with an additive in the phosphate that allowed etching for aluminum as well as steel, a process that actually eats into the metal surface and thoroughly cleans it for good paint adhesion. It used electrostatic and conventional spray guns and could handle parts up to eight feet wide and seven feet long. It could apply enamel, epoxy, acrylic and vinyl paint on both steel and aluminum surfaces, and its baking ovens dried the antennas at 425 degrees.

It all combined into a steady and long-term business, and the decision to enter the TVRO market with their own antenna spurred Triangle to some considerable thought and analysis.

"Our customers kept saying the market's dropping and they wanted better prices," McKay said. "They would tell us the guy down the block can paint cheaper or build a buttonhook for a few dollars less, so we found ourselves facing the biggest decision of this year — entering the TVRO industry with our own antenna."

McKay admits it was a tough decision, one that he knew would cost him most, if not all, of their OEM accounts. "We did not and would not have stopped selling to any of these manufacturers," he said. "To us, business is business, but many of them — out of pride, perhaps — could not buy from a competitor."

A Triangle Engineering family portrait. (Front row, left to right) Jeannean Hutchins, Kay Varnell, Dale McKay; (Back row) Ralph Brown, Fred Ketterer, Preston Robinson and Terry White.

A Decision To Go

The venture looked worthy, though. With Triangle's metal fabricating experience, plus the capacity to manufacture every piece of the antenna in-house from raw materials, there seemed to be everything to gain. The decision was to go.

"We spent two months making the fixtures and jigs to get into production," said Fred Ketterer, who came to Triangle by way of DH Satellite, Prairie du Chien, Wis. and is satellite supervisor. "We just recently started showing the prod-

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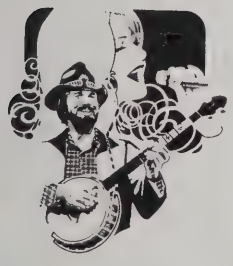

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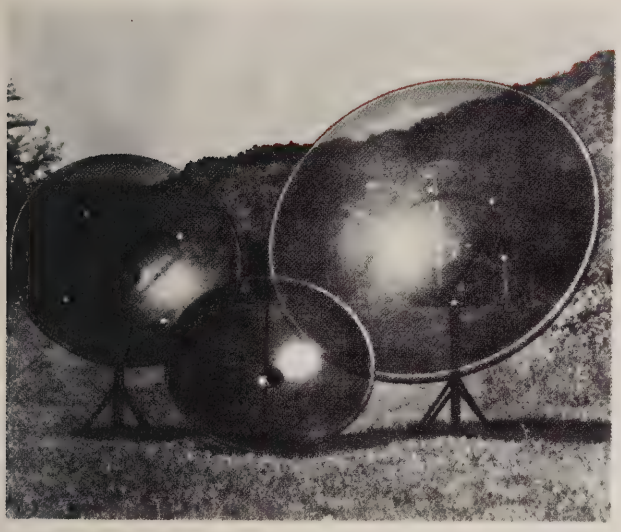

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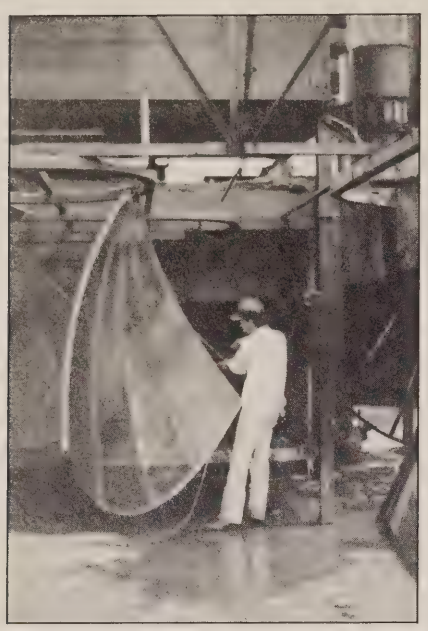


One step in Triangle's five-stage wash/rinse system.

uct to distributors, but once we take a dish around and they see it, they want it."

Ketterer is referring to Triangle's new 10-foot mesh antenna, the Tristar-10, and he attributes the reasons for the warm reception to the way the dish is manufactured.

The Tristar-10 comes in four quadrants with holes that are punched rather than made with a drill press. Punching eliminates metal burrs (and the grind marks that show where the burrs were burnished off), as well as the mismatched holes that can complicate assembly. The Tristar's outer rim is rolled to the correct angle to maintain parabolic accuracy and it is offered in both aluminum and steel mesh models. McKay describes the pricing on both versions as "very competitive."

The Tristar-10's mount is a compact steel design with infinite adjustable declination, 3.5 to 6.5 degrees.

Finding Distributors

McKay reports that Triangle is in the process of building its distributor network, starting regionally and aiming for growth. "We started regionally simply because of the numbers involved," he said. "At this point we're selling everything we can produce. With our current capability here, we can make 500 to 750 per week, and we have another building that we're moving some of the satellite business into, which will allow us to increase production.

Increased production will allow expansion of the distribution network nationally, he said.

"We're looking for more distributors. We are very loyal to distributors and we're not approaching dealers direct at all. We give our distributors geographic areas to work in, and whenever we get an inquiry, we tell them who we already have in that area. If it's conflictive, we let them know."

Triangle occupies a 60,000 square foot building in Jacksonville and employs approximately 65 people. That number swells to 100 or more during peak periods when increased production is needed.

In addition to McKay and Ketterer, Triangle's executives include Preston Robinson, president; John Felter, Sr., vice-president and special consultant; Terry White, sales service coordinator; Ralph Brown, production engineer; Dennis Rogers, production supervisor; Kay Varnell, secretary/treasurer; and Carl Matson, special engineering consultant.

Triangle is gearing up for a long future in the satellite industry with an improved painting system and proposed new products.

Production engineer Brown credits its computer technology as instrumental to the parabolic accuracy that went into the Tristar-10.

"We use a Weidematic 3050 CNC punch press," he said. "CNC means Computer Numerical Control, which means the computer gives us holes that are punched with a very high degree of accuracy. That does a lot to help us keep our parabolic."

According to Brown, Triangle is making a long term commitment to TVRO and is already planning new market entries.

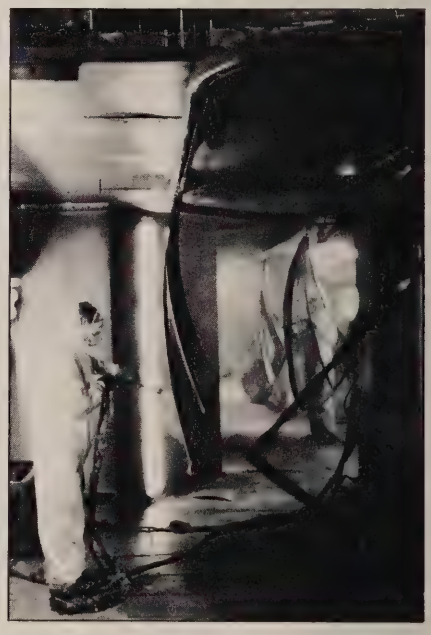
"We're planning in the near future to produce an eight-foot solid aluminum dish," he said. "We've purchased a spinning machine and we're in the process right now of making the mold for a six-foot spun. Whether or not we're going to spin the eight-foot or use some other method to produce it, we haven't decided yet."

New Paint System

Anticipating the growth in production, McKay reports their painting system will be upgraded. "We're building one more elaborate than the one we have," he said. "In fact, it's going to make the current one look primitive."

Triangle is also aware of the implications of Ku-band. In a recent trial, McKay reports that the Tristar-10 produced an acceptable picture from a Ku satellite. "But if there is a problem with the mesh we're using," he said, "it can be easily interchanged because the mesh panels are all screwed on. We're looking into a conversion kit for antennas to convert them to Ku band — replacement mesh panels. We know it will work with our antenna, and it's possible it'll work for others."

McKay feels that Triangle Engineering of Arkansas has some definite advantages over other antenna makers. "There's the fact that we make everything for the antenna in-house," he said. "We're hard-tooled and we're using this accuracy — and our forty years of technology in metal fabrication — to make a quality product."



Antenna quadrants are sprayed with thermoset acrylic paint

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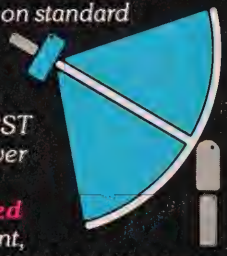

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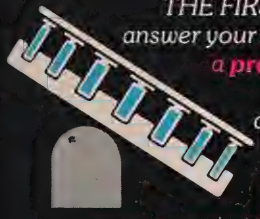

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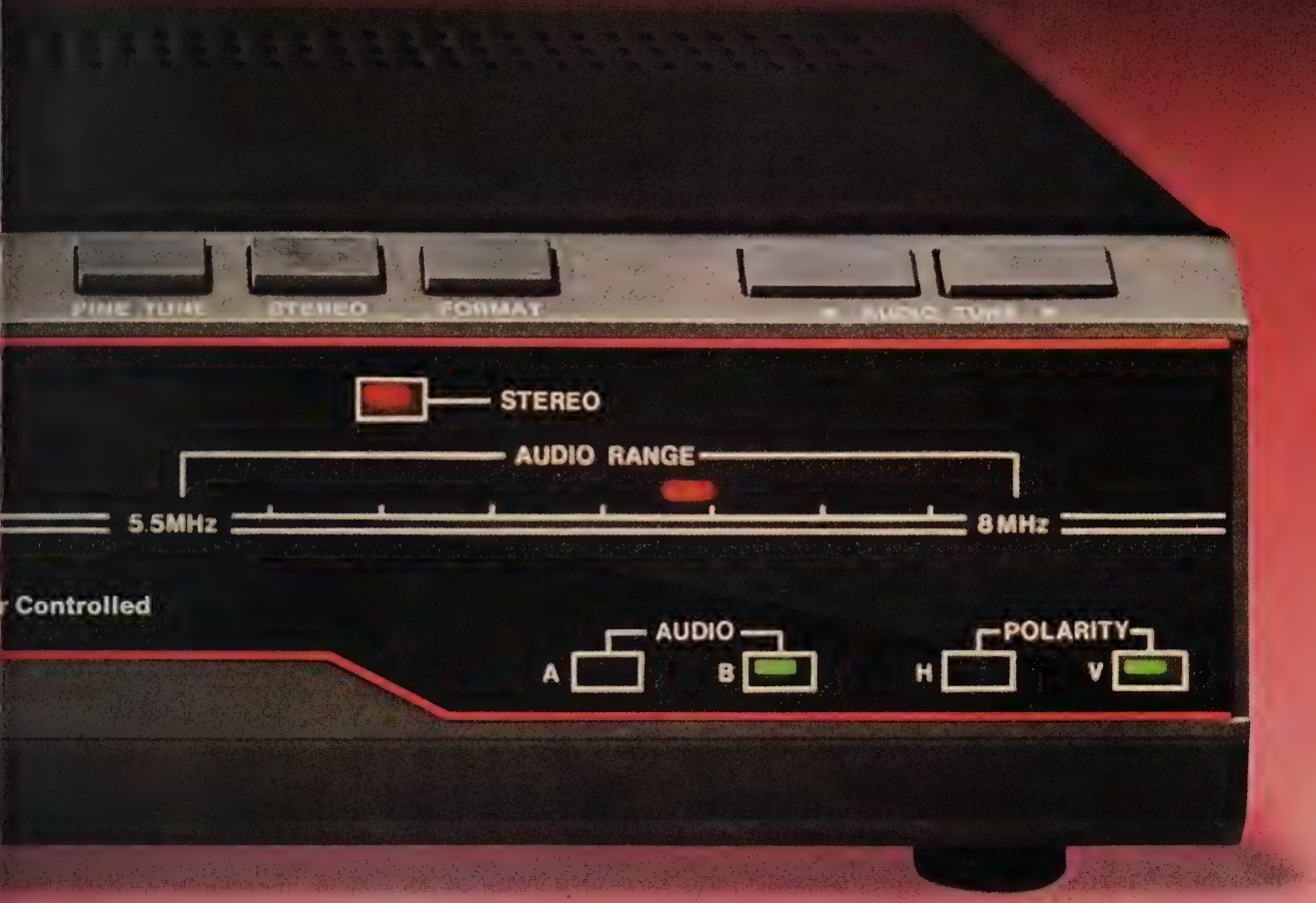

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Electronic Ratios And The Bel

By Tim Cummuta

While Alexander Graham Bell was working on his communications system, he found the need for an accurate way of describing sound increases and decreases. He decided on the unit of measurement known as the bel. This unit of measurement is based on the relationship between the units being measured. It is a number determined by the ratio of the levels being measured.

It was realized early on that the bel was too large for practical measurements to be made. So the decibel came into existance. The decibel is 1/10 of a bel.

Even though the decibel was created for use in sound measurement, it has found wide use in every area of the electronics world. The decibel is used in reference to sound measurements, voltage measurements, current measurements and power measurements.

Logarithms

To understand this way of measuring levels, we must understand logarithms. There are two important types of logarithms, "common" and "natural". Both types are used extensively in electronics. Natural logarithms are used mostly in engineering, which is of little value to us here. Common logarithms are used both in engineering and by technicians. The theory of common logarithms is this: *any number can be represented by multiplying the number 10 by itself a given number of times.* Very confusing, right? Now you can see why it is a great deal easier to purchase a log table than to attempt to work out, for example, the logarithm of 2. Log tables can be found in any good engineering Tables and Formulas book.

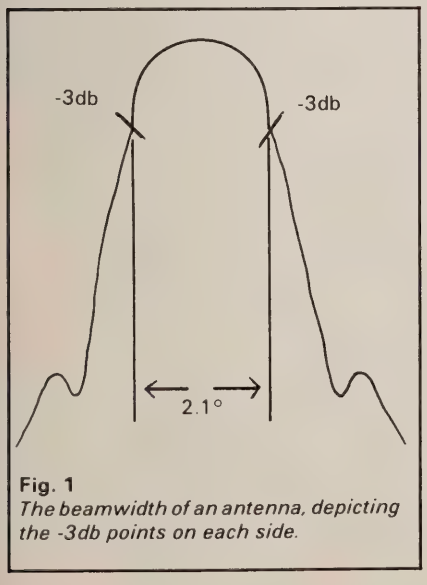

Fig. 1
The beamwidth of an antenna, depicting the -3db points on each side.

Electronic Ratios

From this point on, we will express the term *decibel* in the more familiar form *db.* When we see *db* in some way, we must say to ourselves, *There are two values being compared here. What are they?* It is very important to realize that this will always be an expression of some ratio. Let's look at some mathematical representations of this.

Looking at a typical amplifier circuit, let's find out what the voltage gain of this circuit would be. We will let the input voltage be equal to 1 millivolt, and the output voltage will equal 1 volt. The formula for expressing the relationship in db is:

$$db = 20 \log \frac{E1}{E2}$$

It does not matter which number is used as the numerator. You are interested in the ratio between these numbers. Put the larger number on top for easy division. Let's take our ratio and reverse it for easy division. With E1 being the input voltage, and E2 being our output voltage, our formula would look like this:

$$db = 20 \log \frac{E2}{E1}$$

Now by injecting our values into the formula we have:

$$db = 20 \log \frac{1}{.001}$$

If we work out the division in this problem, we find that the ratio of the input and output voltage is 1000. Now looking this value up in a log table we see that the logarithm for 1000 is 3.0. Now let's multiply this by 20, and our answer becomes 60db. From this we can see that a voltage ratio of 1000 is a ratio of 60db. In this case, it is a gain of 60db.

Power Ratios

Taking that same amplifier we used in the prior discussion, let's see what our power gain is. The formula for the power ratio is:

$$db = 10 \log \frac{P2}{P1}$$

We will let our input power, P1, be equal to 1 milliwatt. We will let our output power be equal to 1 watt. The output power is P2. Substituting our values for the variables P1 and P2, the formula is written in this way:

$$db = 10 \log \frac{1}{.001}$$

Once again we have a ratio of 1000. This appears to be very similar situation as before, but it's not. When we finish the calculation here, we will see that it is an entirely different answer. Once again the logarithm for 1000 is 3.0. Carrying this forward, we find that the power gain of this circuit is worked out to be 30db.

You can see that the second answer is, numerically, half the value of the first answer. It is entirely possible to have both of these values in the same circuit situation. The difference comes from the fact that in the first problem we dealt with voltage gain, and in the second problem we dealt with the power gain of the circuit. The confusion is resolved by understanding how the initial power values are derived. The important fact here is that there is a sizeable difference in the values. We must be aware of what we are dis-

cussing when talking about gain and loss in circuits.

In this field, we tend to talk about the amounts of gain or loss without ever resolving these numbers out to their absolute values. We may, for instance, know that we need 30dbm for an input signal to a given receiver. When we calculate the signal that the receiver will receive, we can be sure that if we have determined there is enough signal power for this receiver to function correctly, it will. This can be done without ever determining the absolute values of voltage or power — voltage being given in volts, or power given in watts.

With manufacturers bombarding us with numbers all the time, you can see the importance of having an understanding of these terms. If an antenna manufacturer specifies a 3db beamwidth for his particular product, what does that mean to us? To figure this out, there are a few things that you must know first: **(1)** Antennas are measured by how much power they can radiate or receive from a given source. **(2)** The beamwidth is determined by the width of the radiated beam, as the power level drops down to 3db less power, along both sides off-center from the direction of maximum reception. (See Fig. 1)

Half Power Point

The point at which the power level drops −3db is known as the half power point. If we take this number and use our formula, we can find the power ratio that gave us this 3db change. Putting this number into the formula, we will have:

$$10 \log \frac{P2}{P1} = 3db$$

Now if we divide both sides by the number 10 we will then have:

$$\log \frac{P2}{P1} = .3$$

If we look up .3 in the log table, we find that it is the logarithm for the number 2. The number 2 is the ratio of P1 to P2. Another way of saying this is: *P2 is either twice as big or half the size of P1.* If P2 were half the size of P1, all you would have to do is reverse the division portion of the problem and you would end up with our ratio of 2 again.

Logarithmic Isn't Linear

You can see that the relationship between the ratio and its decibel equivalent is not a linear one. That is to say, for a given ratio number increase, the rise in db is not the same numerically. An example of this is: a ratio of 10 in a power formula is an increase or decrease of 10db. A power ratio of 100 is an increase or decrease of 20db. The *power* was increased by a factor of 10 from the first example to the second; the *increase in db* is by a factor of 2 from the first example to the second.

You can see from this that we can easily be dealing with extremely large ratios and not really have a feel for the size of the changes taking place. A change of 60db is a power change of 1,000,000. If the input to a certain receiver is −60dbm, this signal is 1,000,000 times less in strength than 1 milliwatt. 1 milliwatt is equal to $\frac{1}{1000}$ of a watt.

Conclusion

Even if you can do all the system calculations without resolving the answer out to its absolute value, it is very important to have a good understanding of the signal levels that you are dealing with. High signal power radiates very easily from one poorly shielded coax to another. High power has a tendency to cause certain types of amplifiers to exhibit very unacceptable intermodulation products.

When dealing with the extraordinarily small signals at the input to the LNA, −121dbw, it is obvious that any loss that can be avoided, should be avoided. This is the main reason behind using larger cable when running higher frequencies. There isn't any substitute for a good understanding of the basics.

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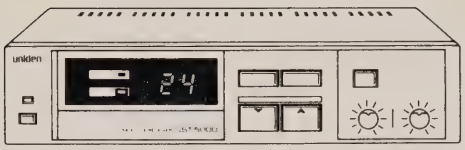
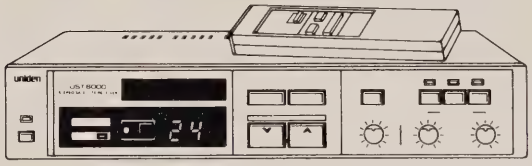


UST 5000 Receiver



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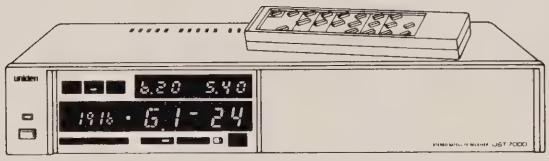
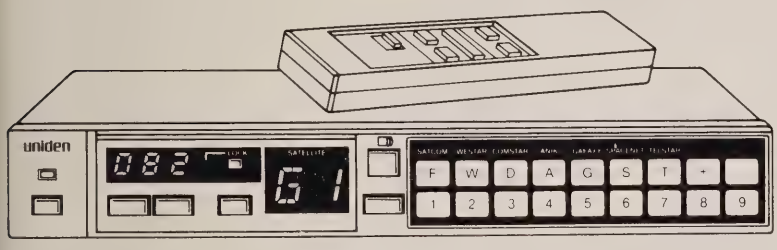


UST 7000 Receiver



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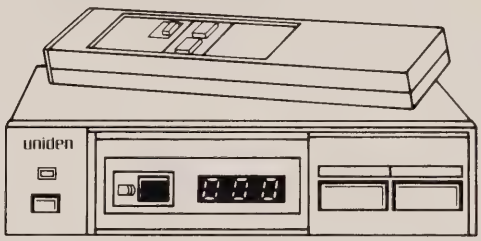

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Tuning To Ku

(continued from page 42)

Of course, the advantage of a single antenna system is you only need one dish in the yard. The disadvantage is all receivers will have to watch the bird the dish is aimed at. Eventually it may even be less expensive to use one dish, but right now the cost of elaborate dual band feeds, offset mounting hardware and oversized LNA covers costs about as much as an additional small dish for the Ku-band system.

Separate Dish Advantage

The big advantage of the separate dish method is in multiple receiver systems one can watch either Ku- or C-band transponders from any receiver in the system. Dad can watch the big game in the den, and Mom and the kids can tune any C-band program they want on any satellite. Of course, you can use a much smaller dish for Ku-band reception. For this article I used the True Focus six-footer. I fitted it out with a Chaparral super-feed (no polarotor) and a Luxor Ku-band LNB. In order to fasten the feed on the existing tripod mount, I mounted it inside the scalar plate of a C band feedhorn.

I don't suppose this helps the impedance match between the LNB and the feed, but it worked. Using this method makes it somewhat hard to align the feed properly. Most of the small dish manufacturers, like True Focus, are working on special buttonhooks for the Ku feeds. Keep your eyes open at the show.

While on the subject of antennas my experiments and those of others on the 'Ham net' concur that it is very important to have an accurately formed reflector. A good small one will play better than a badly formed big one. If you use a motorized mount, you must use one that has little or no play. Bandwidth is related to frequency, and at 12 Ghz, if you are off the bird very much, you won't get any picture at all. Mishapen antennas have sidelobe problems that will drive you crazy. If you get every satellite twice — neither very well — you can bet that the dish you're using is not accurate enough to get the job done.

Considering today's prices I lean toward the two-dish system method, if the room to install a separate dish exists. I certainly recommend a two-dish system for your first attempt and for any display at your shop. It's easier to align the system the first time and has more capabilities. Besides that, you can show what a good job a small dish can do.

I was very pleased with the results at Ku-band. I was even able to receive some of the east coast spot beams on the Canadian birds with the six-footer. They weren't sparkle free, but viewable, and we were having a heavy snowstorm during the time I was ready to try to find pictures. Was I surprised when SBS 3 came roaring through, sparkle free! Notice the photo of the dish the next morning with about a foot of snow sitting in the bottom of it. It was still receiving almost sparkle free pictures. I'm beginning to believe that all the scare talk on rain and snow attenuation was exaggerated.

As you can tell, I'm excited about Ku-band. It's the future for satellite communications and DBS type programming for the next ten years. People are going to be doing some amazing things with some very small antennas. I would guess that someone will be showing decent pictures off the new K2 bird on a two-footer before the year is out. The sheer number of Ku-band birds that are scheduled for orbit is mindboggling. I count over 400 available transponders in the next few years. The big future is going to be for commercial applications such as video conferencing and data transmissions. So get on the bandwagon. Right now is the time to be experimenting with Ku-band systems. The future is here today. The demand for technicians with Ku-band experience is going to increase rapidly in the last half of this decade and throughout the 1990's.

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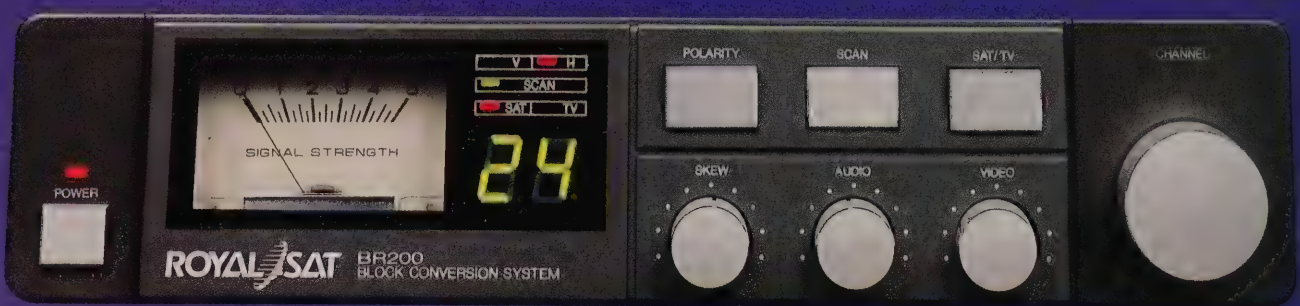

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Sales Success Hinges On Skillful Presentation

By Charles E. Treas

In a recent STVO article, the importance of sales planning was explained. This month, we want to present a few hints for making a good sales presentation.

According to Charles Futrell, a leading expert on selling, there are 10 steps in the overall sales process. These are prospecting, preapproach, approach, presentation, preliminary trial closes, uncovering objections, meeting objections, more trial closes, and the close. To these should be added one more: the all-important follow-up!

This article will focus on the approach and the sales presentation, with emphasis on the use of trial closes. A future article will deal with how to handle objections and interruptions.

The Approach

There are many ways to approach a prospect, but they can be grouped into three major types, according to Futrell: statements, questions, and demonstrations.

Whether you open with a statement, question, or demonstration, your basic objectives are to capture the *attention* of the prospect, stimulate his or her *interest,* and to provide a "transition" into the sales presentation itself.

Some types of statements you can use include **(1)** introducing yourself; **(2)** complimenting the prospect, his or her home or business; **(3)** mentioning a mutual friend who gave you a referral; or **(4)** offering a gift or premium.

When you use *questions,* they will help to uncover the needs or problems that are important to the prospect and show how you and your product or service can relate to these needs or problems.

A *demonstration* approach involves the immediate use of the product itself, or some other visual aid, which becomes a focal point for the presentation. This is a great way to start making a sale, because it offers a way for both the presenter and the prospect to relieve much of the stress so often present in a sales presentation. It does this by providing a "third party," in effect, or a point of mutual interest.

Whatever type of opening you use, you should start showing the customer as soon as you can the *benefits* to be derived from purchasing and using your product or service!

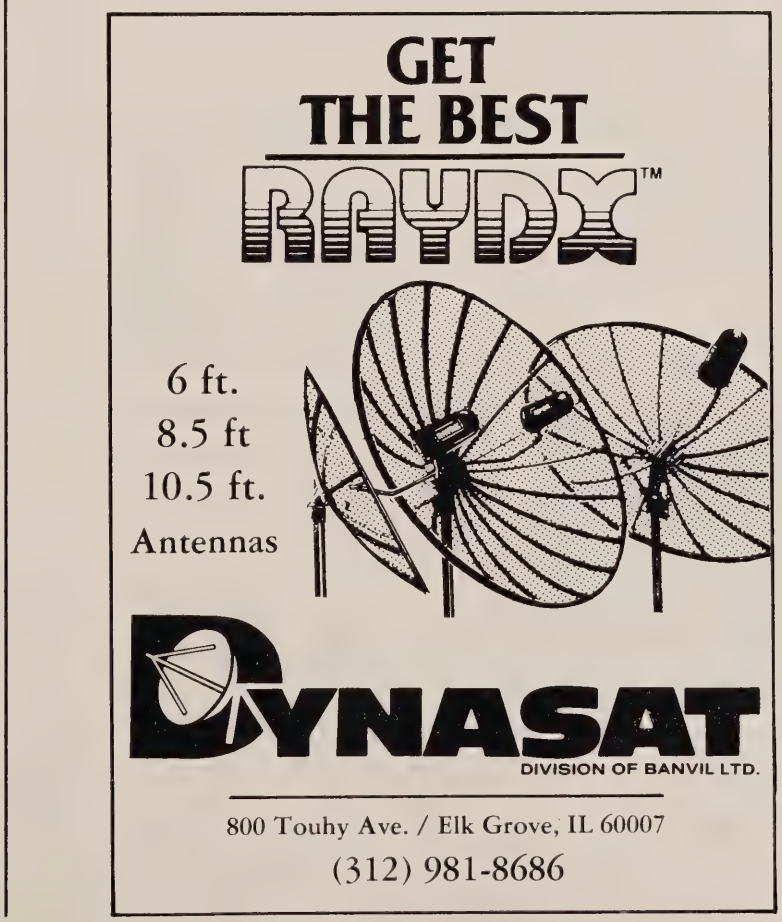
"Your customer benefit approach should be carefully constructed so as to anticipate the buyer's response," adds Dr. Futrell.

However, he adds that you should be ready for "the unexpected," such as when a salesman once said, "This office machine will pay for itself in no time," and the customer then replied, "Fine! As soon as it does, ship it to us!"

Other types of approaches include the curiosity approach, the opinion approach, and the shock approach. With a little imagination and experience, a good salesperson can come up with ideas for adapting these to his or her own product line.

Presentation

The basic purpose of any sales presentation is to convey *knowl-*



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edge—knowledge about the features, advantages, and benefits of your product or service ("FAB"). The buyer will then develop favorable *attitudes* toward your product, which lead to a *desire,* or need, for the product or service, and the *belief* that yours is the best brand to select! This is called the *conviction* stage in the buying process.

To recap, the five purposes of the sales presentation (or stages in buying) are (1) knowledge, (2) attitude, (3) desire, (4) belief, and (5) conviction.

To achieve successful progress of your presentation through these five stages, you should do three things, says Futrell:

Step 1: Fully discuss the features, advantages, and *benefits* of your product. Tell your whole story.

Step 2: Present your marketing plan. For your wholesalers and retailers, this is your suggestion on how they should *resell* the product. For end users, it is your suggestion on how they can *use* the product.

Step 3: Explain your business proposition. This step relates the *value* of your product to its *cost.* It should be discussed last, since you always want to present your product's benefits and marketing plan relative to your product's price.

Trial Closes

The trial close has been called "a major step in any sales presentation," and is an excellent sales technique. For one thing, it can save lots of your time, which you can then use in making more sales calls!

Many salespeople, even highly successful ones, admit that they hate to ask for the order. There's nothing wrong with this — it comes from a perfectly normal fear of rejection. The trial close is asking for the order in such a way that you can continue your presentation *even if you are turned down.* A frequently used one is the "assumptive" close in which you appear to assume that the customer is going to buy. For example, you might say "Your order will be delivered on Monday," or ask "Will this be cash, or charge?"

One that works well, and can be used very early in your presentation, is merely to say, "What do you think?" right after you have described a way your product or service can benefit the customer.

Here are some other good ones: "Are these the features you're looking for?" "That's great, isn't it?" and "I think that's important, don't you?" Trial closes like these can get the customer's order, if ready to buy — or draw out any remaining objections, if not.

The "Sell Sequence"

According to Professor Futrell, a very useful way to help you remember to use trial closes is to use the *Sell Sequence.* Each letter of the word "sell" stands for a step to take in making your presentation:

S — show a feature of the product

E — explain the advantage of the feature

L — lead into the benefit the customer will get from that advantage

L — *let the customer talk!*

Objections

In a follow-up article next month, we will continue our "tips for successful selling" by explaining some ways to draw out objections and how to deal with them, once expressed.

About The Author:

Charles Treas is Professor of Marketing at the University of Mississippi, where he has taught since 1966. His MBA is from Mississippi State University and PhD. from the University of Alabama.

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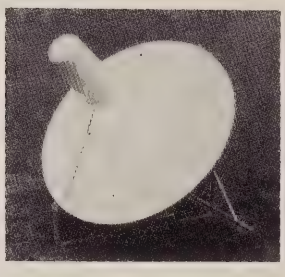

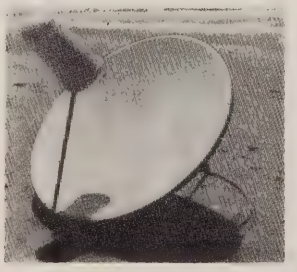

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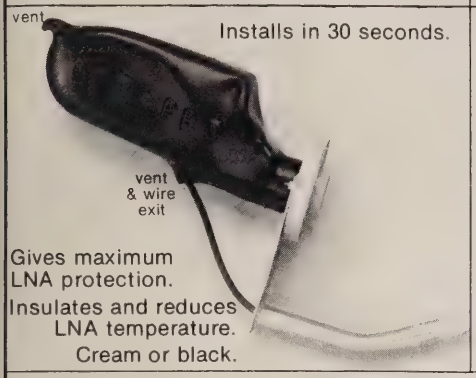	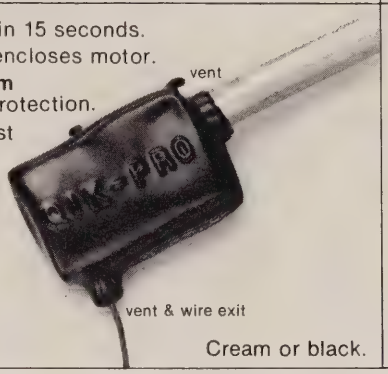	

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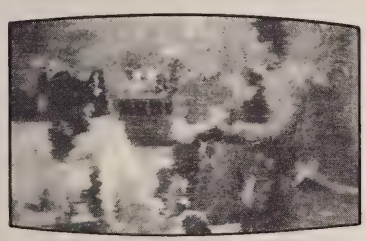
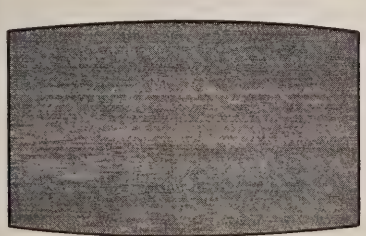


Non-destructive interference (Can still see some of the picture)



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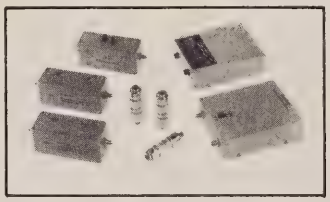
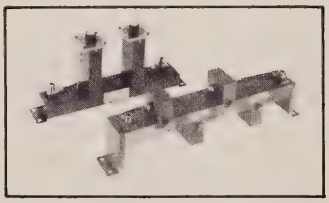


IF filters for non-destructive interference



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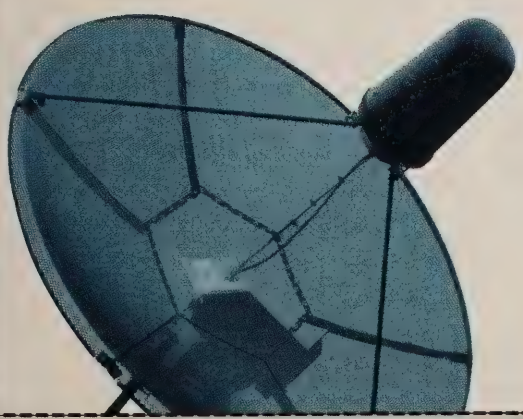

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Round Up

(continued from page 80)

thing about electronics or business. That has been the most aggravating thing about 1985."

This year Carter said his company has consistently put in a least one dish a week and overall they have been very pleased. "1986 will be a good year if the scrambling issue is resolved to a certain degree," he said.

"Our main goal will just be to put in as many dishes as we can."

Clearwater, Fla. — Stuart Tomlinkon, owner of Apollo Satellite Systems, just began his business two months ago.

"We have done okay, but I thought we would do better," Tomlinkon said. "I think we will be all right.

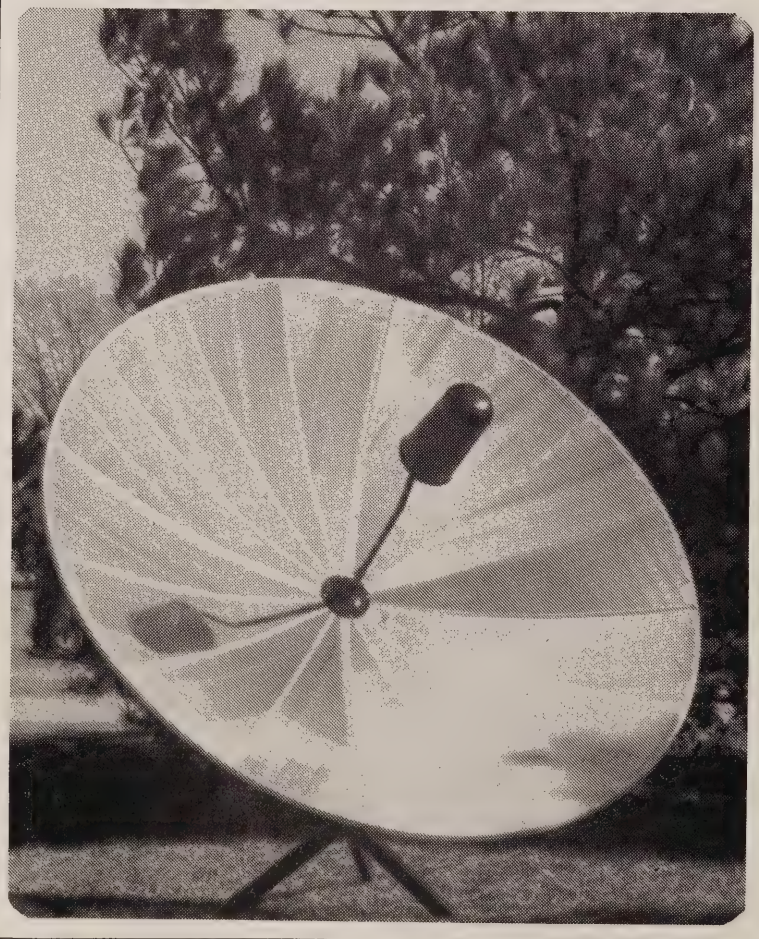
"Right now we are very concerned about scrambling," he said. "We haven't really had any unforeseen problems arise. We just hope the scrambling issue can be resolved soon."

"People do come in and ask about scrambling and this worries us," Tomlinkon said. "If we had some answers it would be easier to tell our customers not to worry."

While the scrambling issue seems to trouble Tomlinkon, none of his customers have showed an interest in Ku-band. "They just don't come in and ask about Ku-band like they do about scrambling," he said.

Even though scrambling has been an issue in 1985, Tomlinkon thinks that Ku-band will be an even bigger issue in 1986. "There will be a lot more questions to be answered about Ku-band in the new year," he said. "We will just have to play it by ear and roll with the punches."

So far Tomlinkon has had good luck with his new business. "We just need to know more about scrambling," he said. "Everyone has an opinion and no one has the answers."



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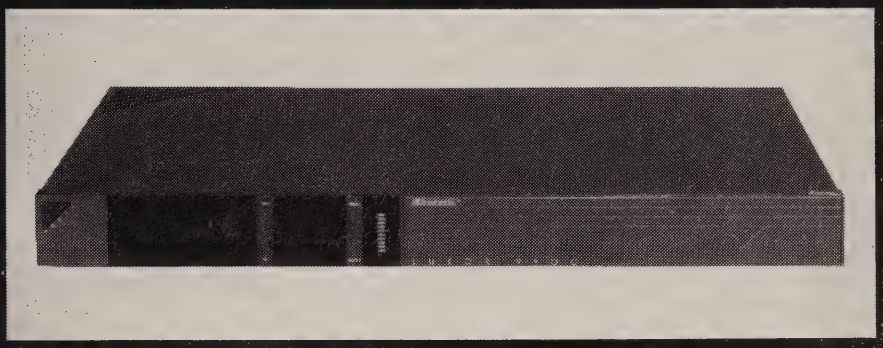

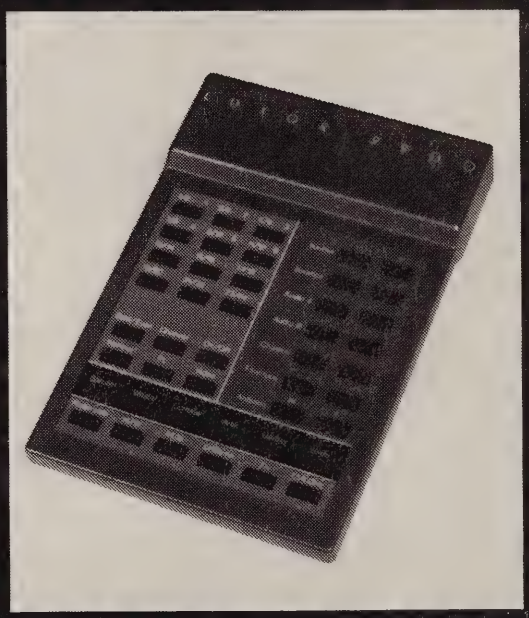

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ProStar XR-1 Provides Top Of The Line Features

By Lee Bolen

The Ramsey ProStar XR-1 is a satellite block receiver system with remote control capabilities. The receiver includes features which are found only in top of the line units. They include frequency synthesized, quartz controlled tuning with digital fine tuning adjustments, a crystal controlled RF modulator for accurate frequency control for the modulated tv tuner signal, LED channel display and LED bar graph display of audio frequency tuning, matrix audio decoding, push-button remote control, electronic polarotor automatic polarity control, and the capability for electronically selecting the appropriate polarity when a dual feed system is provided.

The receiver is manufactured for Ramsey by Mitsumi Electronic Corp. in Japan. The manufacturer provides a one-year warranty for the block converter and receiver system.

Installation Procedure

The block downconverter operates as a conversion unit to transform the 4 GHz signal to a carrier that varies between 440 and 940 MHz. Only one cable connection is needed between the receiver and the block downconverter. It is recommended that a RG-213 cable be used for this purpose to reduce signal loss at the high frequencies provided by the block downconverter. The same cable provides dc power to the block downconverter and low noise amplifier system.

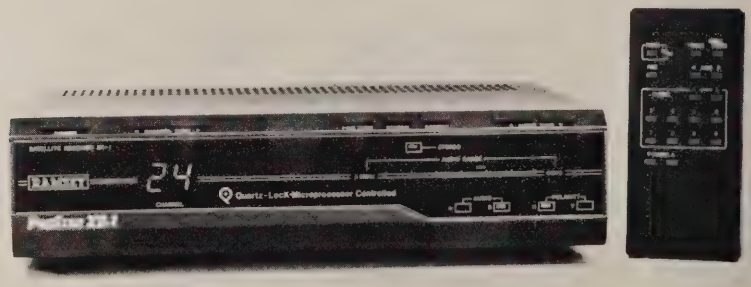
The unit is the first one that has been tested that provides the capability of using a dual feed receiver system with two low noise amplifiers and block converters. The back of the receiver has two RF input type F connectors for the horizontal and vertical input. A switch allows the use of a single input when only one downconverter is used. Adjacent to the RF inputs are connections for polarotor control including pulse, 5 volt dc and ground connections. Adjacent to this terminal strip are adjustments for the horizontal and vertical positioning of the polarotor — which must be made with an alignment tool — and a hand adjustable skew control to permit adjustment of polarity when differences occur between satellites.

The receiver automatically switches polarity between adjacent channels when the correct polarity has been set for that satellite. The rear panel also includes a connection for a television antenna which will loop through the receiver when the receiver is not on, a switch to select the quartz modulator to either channel 3 or 4, and a type F connector to connect to the VHF input terminal of a television receiver. There are two video and audio connectors which are of the RCA phono plug type. The video output connector is to be used with a video monitor or video cassette recorder. The second video out is an unclamped video output which can be used with future decoders or descramblers. The two audio connectors are for left and right audio channels when the stereo matrix decoding mode is selected.

The front of the receiver is attractively laid out with a modern design. All of the function keys provided on the front of the receiver are duplicated on the infrared remote control unit. The front of the receiver includes a power on/off switch and two channel tune switches to step through the channels in either direction.

To the right are buttons to select the fine tuning mode which will be discussed later, a stereo button to select matrix demodulation, a format button to select the polarity format for the satellite in use, and two audio tune buttons to change the frequency of the audio subcarrier. These buttons also are used in the fine tune mode to adjust the video carrier frequency. The front of the receiver has a large LED channel display for the transponder chosen, LED displays to indicate whether or not the receiver is in the stereo mode, the polarity of the transponder that has been selected, and the audio channel which is in use. Also included is an LED bar display which indicates the relative frequency of the audio channel selected. This display can indicate both the audio channel frequency in use in the mono mode and a secondary frequency when stereo has been selected.

The remote control unit provides a duplication of each of the controls including a power switch, a switch



The ProStar XR-1 Receiver

to step through the channels sequentially as well as a series of numeric buttons to permit random access and channel selection. Also included are adjustments for the audio frequency selection and polarity reversal format as well as mono or stereo selection.

Test Review

The installation of the block downconverter and receiver was completed in less than 30 minutes using the standard test system of a ten foot Startek mesh antenna and a Uniden model UST-441 85° low noise amplifier. Both connectors on the block downconverter are located on the same side so it is possible to mount the converter so that they are shielded from the weather when pointed downward. The system worked without any difficulty and the tuning system was simple to operate and effective in its mode of operation.

The stability of the quartz tuning system was apparent in the operation of the receiver. The superiority of this technique of frequency synthesis has been observed by this reviewer in each unit that used this technique. The value of quartz tuning is particularly valuable in a block downconverter system which uses an intermediate frequency band of moderately high frequencies. Although it is not mentioned in the manual, the receiver provides a continuous voltage to the block downconverter and low noise amplifier even when the receiver is turned off. The dc voltage was measured to be 19 volts.

Because the outside amplification units are powered at all times, temperature variations did not affect the stability of the system, and once initial fine tuning adjustments had been made, the system locked on to each transponder channel accurately and with precision. The adjustable skew control for the polarotor was useful in making minor adjustments for polarization variations between satellites. This is one adjustment, however, that is not available on the remote control unit, so these adjustments must be made when necessary from the back of the receiver unit.

The receiver is an almost all black unit of modern design with low profile and minimum space requirement. The unit measures 11-¾″ in width and is only 3-¼″ high. The depth of the unit is slightly under 10″ but room must be provided in back for the type F and phono connectors which are located behind the unit. The appearance was attractive and unobtrusive and the large LED channel display for transponders and LED indicators were visible across the room.

The unit was the first to be reviewed that included a stereo demodulation system. The manu-

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Attractive and modern in appearance, the ProStar XR-1 needs only minimum set-up. It's operating control system is simple to use and requires little customer training time.

facturer has chosen to include only matrix demodulation, however, which limits the applicability of this stereo feature. At the present time the dominant mode used for television and FM stereo audio signals employs discrete carrier frequencies for the left and right audio channels. Disney and MTV are perhaps the most prominent users of matrix modulation. It would seem prudent for receiver manufacturers to provide the capability for stereo processing both discrete and matrix audio programming. As the networks begin their own stereo broadcasting and newer television receivers include demodulators for received stereo transmissions, one would assume that more viewers will have the capability of listening to stereo signals with amplifiers and stereo speakers within their television sets. Therefore the value of stereo demodulation from satellite receivers will become more important. If satellite receivers do not include all demodulation methods for stereo signals from transponders, it would seem important to provide an audio subcarrier output for connection to an external stereo processor.

Excellent Reception

The ProStar XR-1 provides an excellent block downconversion system with features that provide the highest quality picture with excellent drift free reception. The frequency synthesized quartz crystal control tuning and crystal controlled RF modulator represents state-of-the-art techniques, and the picture received from this receiver was one of the highest quality that has been reviewed. The capability to accept both a horizontal and vertical dual feed system is another feature which makes the ProStar block downconverter system adaptable for multiple receiver use with a minimum of additional connections. The inclusion of matrix stereo demodulation is of some value, but the failure to provide all methods of demodulation for audio subcarriers limits the value of this feature. The audio tuning must also be adjusted by ear since the LED tuning display does not accurately display the frequency of the audio subcarriers chosen.

In summary, the unit is attractive and modern in appearance, provides state-of-the-art tuning capabilities with a minimum of set-up and adjustment time and has an operating control system which is simple to use and should require little customer training time. The unit also stores information in memory to include the audio format frequency and fine tuning adjustments for a single satellite so that frequent readjustment is not necessary. The infrared remote control was sensitive and operated conveniently throughout the room in which the receiver was placed. The random access tuning and electronic polarization adjustment simplified the use of the remote control. The system is particularly well adapted for use with dual downconversion and would be an appropriate choice for this use.

ProStar XR-1
Satellite TV Receiver

- Frequency synthesized quartz controlled tuning.
- Stable block down converter system with capability for IF inputs from both horizontal and vertical block down converter amplifier systems.
- Automatic polar rotor switching adjustments.
- Infrared remote control.
- LED displays for transponder channel and audio frequency tuning.

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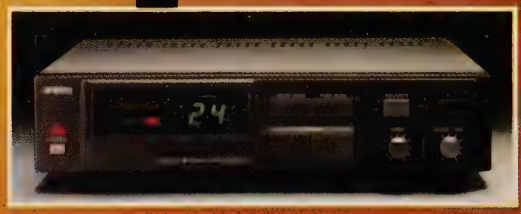

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HBO

(Continued from page 66)

so far, each and every programmer that's made a decision has come down to scrambling with M/A-Com. A common scrambling technology is evolving, and the delivery through the M/A-Com descrambler is also becoming standard, too. So the marketplace is evolving in synchronization out of concern for the dish owner, who says, 'I don't want to buy a box for each and every service. That's nuts!' We think it's nuts, too, because that does not a business make. And if a situation does evolve where a dish owner has to buy multiple descramblers, that's what's going to bring Congress down on us. So the programmers are bearing all that in mind — both the business concern and the legislative concern, and that alone is doing the trick.

"We don't think that legislation is necessary."

Now Comes Ku-Band

According to recent press releases, Home Box Office, Inc., has made plans for a major move to Ku-band programming of its satellite-delivered TV signals — in addition to its established C-band turf. HBO has already leased four transponders of the Satcom K-1 satellite that was originally scheduled for launch in December 1985. Also, HBO has reportedly purchased all 16 of the transponders of RCA Americom's Satcom K-3 satellite scheduled for launch in late 1987. K-3 signals will be scrambled immediately, according to HBO.

"We have set up a C-band program," said Herlinger. "We believe there is very little Ku-band equipment that's being used by consumers, and we intend to stick with our C-band plan for that.

"Basically, we're going into Ku-band to provide our cable affiliates an opportunity they need, particularly our urban affiliates that are having problems with terrestrial microwave interference. Our intention all along has been that we've already established a C-band business. That's what consumers are buying, that's what they own. There really was no reason to extend it at this point. However, our cable affiliates can make use of the Ku-band transmission, so that's the way we decided to go."

Herlinger acknowledged her use of the phrase, "C-band business" meant the entire program of distributing M/A-Com consumer model descramblers, and the management process to sell subscription programming services to earth station owners. But "business" does not extend to Ku-band HBO programming plans.

Herlinger said apartment complexes needing to acquire commercial M/A-Com descramblers should contact local cable affiliate. "The local cable affiliates, just like our direct business, is authorized to work with the building on establishing a commercial decoder. In some cases, the cable affiliate will erect the dish, (or let the apartment complex) buy it, or he'll lease it. In each area it's different.

(Continued on page 122)

Reflector Is More Accurate Term For Describing Dish

By Gus Grevemberg

I have tried to picture in my mind how dealers look at the satellite antenna system. If I could see a reflector, mount and feed support as they see them, my job as a teacher would be easy.

After many classes and seminars, the picture is clearer. They are seeing an overall concept, but they don't envision each component.

The reflector, commonly called a "dish," is like a curved mirror that reflects light to a single point, regardless of where the light strikes the mirror. Light and microwave signals travel at the same speed: 186,000 miles per second. Just as light is reflected off a curved mirror, microwave signals are reflected off a parabolic reflector, or "dish." The reflector must be extremely accurate to reflect all the energy striking its surface back to the single—or central — point. We call this point a "feedhorn," and its proper name is *circular waveguide*.

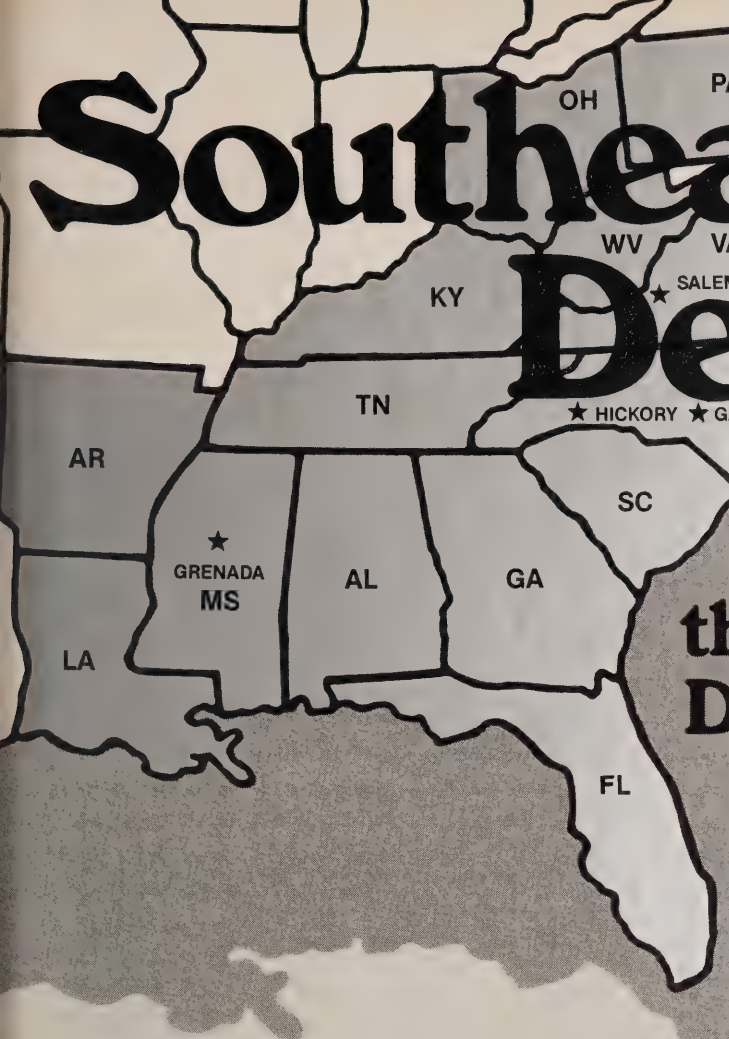
The circular waveguide, or feedhorn, is a crucial part of the overall antenna system. To allow the circular waveguide to "look" at the entire reflector without over-illumination or under-illumination, we must control the "look angle."

The scaler assembly is the device we use to change the look angle of the circular waveguide. When the scaler assembly is moved toward the front of the waveguide, the look angle is reduced. As it is moved toward the back, the look angle increases. The angle must be adjusted so that it will not under-illuminate or over-illuminate the reflector. Why? Because all life generates noise or energy. If we "overfeed" the reflector, we end up looking at the ground, trees or other noise-generating life.

The *real antenna* in a TVRO system is the probe inside the circular waveguide. It is cut to dimensions that make it compatible with the frequencies desired, which in our case is either C-band or Ku-band. Of course, we in the industry have become accustomed to referring to the parabolic reflector as the antenna, when in fact it is just that — a reflector.

If we under-illuminate a reflector, we could just as well use a smaller one. It is extremely important that the system be properly designed. Reflector manufacturers need to take as much care designing the feed system support as they take on the reflector.

Remember that the antenna is the probe inside the circular waveguide. It must be at the focal point and it must be centered. The reflector is just that — a reflector of microwave signals.



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Ad Budgets Give Handle For Controlling Expenses

Advertising costs are a completely controllable expense. An ad budget is a means of determining and controlling this expense and dividing it wisely between different products and services.

If you want to build sales in your TVRO dealership, it's almost certain you'll need to advertise. How much should you spend? How should you allocate your advertising dollars? How can you be sure your advertising outlays aren't out of line? The advertising budget helps you determine how much you have to spend and helps establish the guidelines for how you're going to spend it.

What you'd like to invest in advertising and what you can afford are seldom the same. Spending too much is obviously an extravagance, but spending too little can be just as bad in terms of lost sales and diminished visibility. Costs must be tied to results. You must be prepared to evaluate your goals and assess your capabilities — a budget will help you do precisely this.

Your budget will help you choose and assess the amount of advertising and its timing. It will also serve as the background for next year's plan.

Budgeting Methods

Each of the various ways in which to establish an advertising budget has its problems as well as its benefits. No method is perfect for all types of businesses, nor for that matter is any combination of methods.

Here concepts from several traditional methods of budgeting have been combined into three basic methods: **(1) Percentage of sales or profits, (2) Unit of sales** and **(3) Objective and task.** You'll need to use judgment and caution in settling on any method or methods.

The most widely used method of establishing an advertising budget is to base it on a percentage of sales. Advertising is as much a business expense as, say, the cost of labor and, thus, should be related to the quantity of goods sold.

The percentage-of-sales method avoids some of the problems that result from using profits as a base. For instance, if profits in a period are low, it might not be the fault of sales or advertising. But if you stick with the same percentage figure, you'll automatically reduce your advertising allotment. There's no way around it: 2% of $10,000 is less than 2% of $15,000.

Such a cut in the advertising budget, if profits are down for other reasons, may very well lead to further losses in sales *and* profits. This in turn will lead to further reductions in advertising investment, and so on.

In the short run a satellite dealer might make small additions to profit by cutting advertising expenses, but such a policy could lead to a long term deterioration of the bottom line. By using the percentage-of-sales method, you keep your advertising in a consistent relation to your sales volume — which is what your advertising should be primarily affecting. Gross margin, especially over the long run, should also show an increase, of course, if your advertising outlays are being properly applied.

What Percentage?

You can guide your choice of a percentage-of-sales figure by finding out what other satellite dealers are doing. These percentages are fairly consistent within a given category of business. It's fairly easy to find out this ratio of advertising expense to sales in your line. Check trade magazines and associations. Your distributor may be able to help along this line, too.

Knowing what the ratio for your industry is will help to assure you that you will be spending proportionately as much or more than your competitors; but remember, these

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IN ORDER TO SERVE YOU BETTER, PLEASE CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE:

1. My business is:
a. dealer
b. distributor
c. manufacturer
d. interested in business
e. other _____

2. My business is located in:
a. a rural area
b. an urban area

3. During an average month, I sell:
a. 0-5 systems
b. 6-15 systems
c. 16-25 systems
d. 26-50 systems
d. 50 or more systems

4. My main business is:
a. home TVRO
b. SMATV
c. electronics/audio/video store
d. furniture store
e. appliance store

5. I purchase TVRO equipment:
a. on a weekly basis
b. every two weeks
c. on a monthly basis
d. less frequently than monthly

6. Do you find that *Satellite TV Opportunities Magazine* helps you in making business decisions:
a. Yes
b. No

7. Which of our monthly features and articles do you read most frequently?
(Circle all that apply)
a. Cover Story
b. Feature Stories
c. TVRO trend stories
d. Business Perspective
e. Sat Scan
f. Successful Marketing
g. Dealer Roundup
h. Product Reviews
i. Technology Section
j. SMATV Section

TO START YOUR NEW SUBSCRIPTION CIRCLE NUMBER 1.

We will bill you later
(If you wish to charge, fill out below.)

□ $25 U.S.
□ $35 Canadian (U.S. Funds)
Charge: □ VISA
□ MASTERCARD

Card No. _____

Bank No _____

Exp. Date _____

_____
(Signature)

TOLL FREE SUBSCRIPTIONS:
1-800-922-2812 .

8. My annual sales volume is:
a. under $50,000
b. $50,000 - $150,000
c. $150,000 - $250,000
d. $250,000 - $500,000
e. $500,000 - $1,000,000
f. $1,000,000 - $5,000,000
g. over $5,000,000

9. What would you like to see more of in *Satellite TV Opportunities Magazine?*

_____

_____

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SATELLITE TV OPPORTUNITIES Magazine

READER SERVICE CARD

HOW TO USE: Each ad and new product feature item carries a key number. To receive more info on any product, just circle the corresponding number on the card.

FEBRUARY 1986

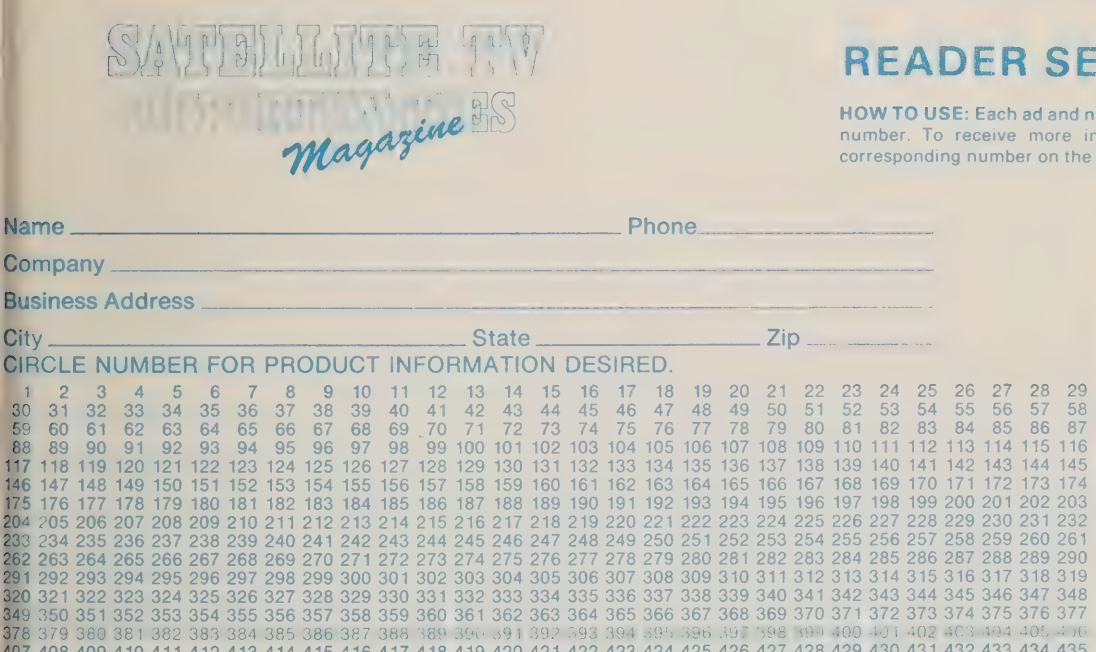
Name _____ Phone _____

Company _____

Business Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

CIRCLE NUMBER FOR PRODUCT INFORMATION DESIRED.



IN ORDER TO SERVE YOU BETTER, PLEASE CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE:

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□ MASTERCARD

Card No. _____

Bank No. _____

Exp. Date _____

_____
Signature

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f. $1,000,000 - $5,000,000
g. over $5,000,000

9. What would you like to see more of in *Satellite TV Opportunities Magazine?*

_____

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OPPORTUNITIES
Magazine

305 W. Jackson Ave.
Oxford, MS 38655

industry averages are not gospel. Your particular situation may dictate that you want to advertise more than or less than your competition. Average may not be good enough for you. You may want to outadvertise your competitors and be willing to cut into short term profits to do so. Growth takes investment.

No business owner should let any method bind him or her. It's helpful to use the percentage-of-sales method because it's quick and easy. It ensures that your advertising budget isn't way out of proportion for your business. It's a sound method for stable markets. But if you want to expand your market share, you'll probably need to use a larger percentage of sales than the industry average.

Which Sales?

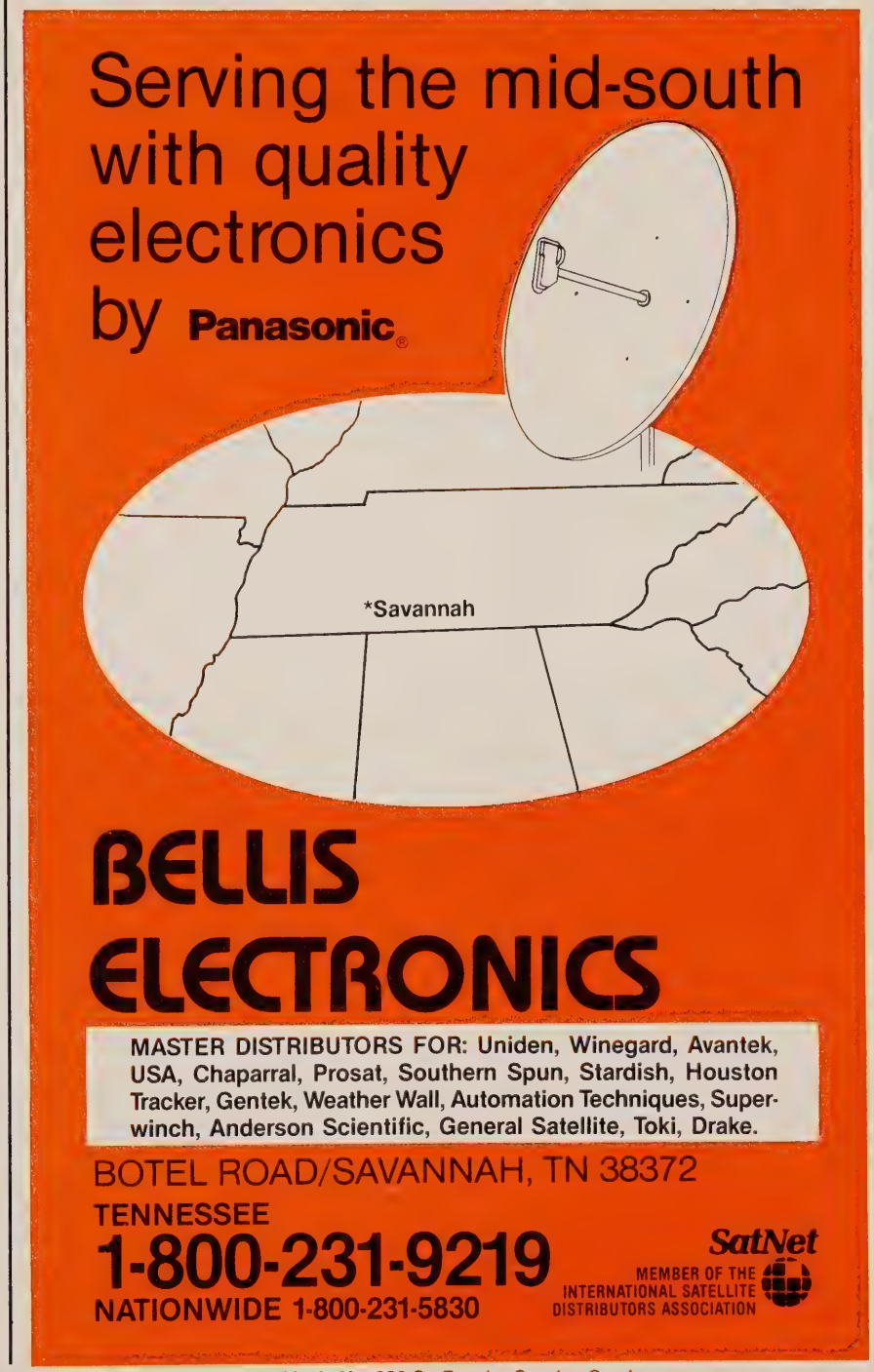
Your budget can be determined as a percentage of past sales, of estimated future sales, or as a combination of the two:

1. **Past sales.** Your base can be last year's sales or an average of a number of years in the immediate past. Consider, though, that changes in economic conditions can make your figure too high or too low.
2. **Estimated future sales.** Your can calculate your advertising budget as a percentage of your anticipated sales for next year. The most common pitfall of this method is an optimistic assumption that your business will continue to grow. You must keep general business trends always in mind, especially if there's the chance of a slump, and hardheadedly assess the directions in your industry and your own operation.
3. **Past sales and estimated future sales.** The middle ground between an often conservative appraisal based on last year's sales and a usually too optimistic assessment of next year's is to combine both. It's a more realistic method during periods of changing economic conditions. It allows you to analyze trends and results thoughtfully and to predict with a little more assurance of accuracy.

Unit of Sales

In the unit-of-sale method you set aside a fixed sum for each unit of product to be sold, based on your experience and trade knowledge of how much advertising it takes to sell each unit. Does it cost X dollars to sell a system? Then you'll probably have to budget 100 times X if you plan to sell a hundred systems. You're simply basing your budget on unit of sales rather than dollar amounts of sales.

Some people consider this method just a variation of percentage-of-sales. Unit-of-sales does, however, probably let you make a closer estimate of what you should plan to spend for maximum effect, since it's based on what experience tells you it takes to sell an actual unit, rather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Circle No. 302 On Reader Service Card.

than an overall percentage of your gross sales estimate.

The unit-of-sales method is particularly useful in fields where the amount of product available is limited by outside factors, such as shortages of a particular component. If that's the situation, you first estimate how many systems will be available to you. Then, you advertise only as much as experience tells you it takes to sell them. Thus, if you have a pretty good idea ahead of time how many will be available, you should have minimal waste in your advertising costs.

This method is also suited for specialty goods, such as television sets and VCRs; however, it's difficult to apply when you have many different kinds of products to advertise and must divide your advertising among these products. The unit-of-sales method is not very useful in sporadic or irregular markets or for style merchandise.

Objective And Task

The most difficult (and least used) method for determining an advertising budget is the objective-and-task approach. Yet, it's the most accurate and best accomplishes what all budgets should:

It relates the appropriation to the marketing task to be accomplished.

It relates the advertising appropriation under usual conditions and in the long run to the volume of sales, so that profits and reserves will not be drained.

To establish your budget by this method, you need a coordinated marketing program with specific objectives based on a thorough survey of your markets and their potential.

While the percentage-of-sales or profits method first determines how much you'll spend without much consideration of what you want to accomplish, the task method establishes what you must do in order to meet your objectives. Only then do you calculate its cost.

You should set specific objectives: not just "Increase sales," but, for example, "Sell 25% more of product X or service Y by attracting the business of young professionals. Then determine what media best reaches your target market and estimate how much it will cost to run the number and types of advertisements you think it'll take to get that sales increase. You repeat this process for each of your objectives. When you total these costs, you have your projected budget.

Of course, you may find that you can't afford to advertise as you'd like to. It's a good idea, therefore, to rank your objectives. As with the other methods, be prepared to change your plan to reflect reality and to fit the resources you have available.

Allocating Your Budget

Once you have determined your advertising budget, you must decide how you'll allocate your advertising dollars. First, you'll have to decide if you'll do any institutional advertising or only promotional advertising.

After you set aside an amount to build your image (if that's your plans for the year), you can then allocate your promotional advertising in a number of ways. Among the most common breakdowns are by: *1) departmental budgets, 2) total budget, 3) calendar periods, 4) media and 5) sales areas.*

1. Departmental Budgets. The most common method of allocating advertising dollars is percent of sales. Those departments or product categories with the greatest sales volume receive the biggest share of the budget.

In a small business or when the merchandise range is limited, the same percentage can be used throughout. Otherwise, a good rule is to use the average industry figure for each product.

By breaking down the budget by departments or products those goods that require more promotion to stimulate sales can get the required advertising dollars. Your budget can be further divided into individual merchandise lines.

2. Total Budget. Your total budget may be the result of integrated departmental or product budgets. If your business has set an upper limit for advertising expense percentage, then your departmental budgets, which are based on different percentages of sales in each area, might be pared down.

In smaller businesses the total budget may be the only one established. It, too, should be divided into merchandise classifications for scheduling.

3. Calendar Periods. Most executives of small businesses usually plan their advertising on a monthly, even a weekly, basis. Your budget, even if it's for a longer planning period, ought to be calculated for these shorter periods. It will give you better control.

The percentage-of-sales methods is also useful here to determine how much money to allocate by time periods. The standard practice is to match sales with advertising dollars. Thus, if February accounts for 5% of your sales, you might give it 5% of your budget.

Sometimes you might want to adjust advertising allocations downward in some of your heavier sales months, so you can boost the budget of some of your poorer periods. But this should be done only if you have reason (as when your competition's sales trends differ markedly from yours) to believe that a change in your advertising timing could improve slow sales.

4. Media. The amount of advertising that you place in each advertising medium — such as direct mail, newspapers or radio — should be determined by past experience, industry practice and ideas from media specialists. Normally it's wise to use the same sort of media your competitors use. That's where, most likely, your potential customers look and listen.

5. Sales areas. You can spend your advertising dollars where your customers already come from, or you can use them to try to stimulate new sales areas. Just as in dividing your appropriation by time periods, it's wise to continue to do the bulk of your advertising in familiar areas. Usually it's more costly to develop new markets than to maintain established ones.

Any combination of these methods may be employed in the formation and allocation of your advertis-

(Continued on page 130)

1986 OFFICIAL SATELLITE DIRECTORY AND BUYER'S GUIDE™

BIGGER & BETTER THAN EVER!

The official source book of products and services for the satellite industry. The new 1986 OFFICIAL SATELLITE DIRECTORY & BUYER'S GUIDE will be off the press in May 1986.

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3. **CANADA** — Listing of all manufacturers, distributors and associations throughout Canada.

As in the past the **1986 OFFICIAL SATELLITE DIRECTORY & BUYER'S GUIDE** will also include these important features:

1. PRODUCT DIRECTORY: A-Z coverage of virtually all the products available for the satellite industry.

2. MANUFACTURER DIRECTORY: Hundreds of specific manufacturers of satellite products, fully identified with addresses and phone numbers.

3. DISTRIBUTORS: A state-by-state breakdown of all satellite distributors with addresses and phone numbers.

4. ASSOCIATIONS: All the satellite trade associations.

5. PUBLICATIONS: All the satellite industry trade publications are listed so that you can contact them for more information.

6. SATELLITE COMPANY PROFILES: Expanded listings for many key manufacturers and distributors with extensive product descriptions and key individuals to contact.

7. INDUSTRY MEMBER CROSS REFERENCE: Know someone's name but can't remember which company he works for? This section will find him or her for you.

8. PROGRAMMING SERVICES: A special section detailing what satellite programming is available and where to obtain it.

9. TOLL FREE PHONE NUMBERS: A useful money saver that lists all 800 WATS lines for many satellite manufacturers.

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Positrap From Microwave Filter

The Positrap interfering carrier scrambling system for CATV and SMATV installations scrambles premium channels. The system is comprised of three components: an encoder, a lower adjacent security module, and a pre-emphasis amplifier. All three units are available for channels 2-6, A-L and 7-13. For more information write Microwave Filter, 6743 Kinne Street, East Syracuse, NY 13057 or call (315) 437-3953.

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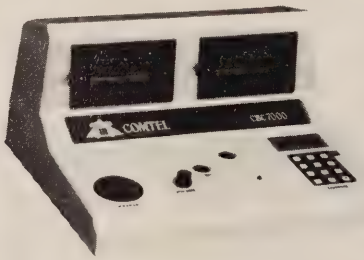
FREE CASSETTE: This free, 60-minute cassette will explain how thousands of businessmen are getting qualified leads with our computer telemarketing system.



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The VM-5 Television Modulator From Nexus

The Nexus VM-5 is designed for adjacent channel operation in SMATV and other small cable TV systems. The internal bandpass filter and spurious performance allow the use of any combination of adjacent channels. The VM-5 features single-panel connections and controls. For more information write Nexus Engineering, 4181 McConnell Drive, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 3J7 or call (604) 420-5322.

Circle No. 253 On Reader Service Card.

The Micro-verter III From ATV Research

The Micro-verter III is housed in a heavy duty aluminum housing and features a built-in power supply, universal video input and RF output circuitry. Also included are externally tunable adjustments for audio, video and subcarrier levels. For more information write ATV Research, 13th and Broadway, Dakota City, NE 68731 or call (402) 987-3771.

Law Requires SMATV License

By Ron Matthews

In 1984, the United States Congress passed the Satellite Viewing Rights Act which finally clarified the right of an individual or single family household to legally receive satellite delivered signals with their TVRO or C Band satellite receiving system.

With this legislation, the individual or household is not required to obtain any local, state or federal licenses or pay any fees for the reception of any of the unscrambled or uncoded satellite programming available.

The situation is different though when satellite signals are received and then retransmitted (distributed) to multiple households or recipients served by SMATV systems in condominiums, hotels, motels, hospitals, campgrounds, trailer parks, etc.

No licensing or fee requirement is involved in the reception and distribution of local broadcasting stations. This has been done for many years with the use of master antenna television systems (MATV systems).

There are, however, three areas the owner or operator of an SMATV system should be aware of regarding licenses and fees associated with satellite signal reception and the dealer should be prepared to discuss them. They are:

1. **Copyright License**
2. **Earth Station License**
3. **Programming Fees**

An SMATV system that receives any of the "super-stations" such as WTBS, WGN, or WOR must obtain a "Copyright License" to receive the super-stations.

To obtain this license, an "Initial Notice of Singal Identity" has to be filed with the licensing division of the Copyright Office. Thereafter, a "Statement of Account" is submitted to the Copyright Office twice a year with a nominal fee — on the order of $26.00.

Since 1979, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has not required a license to use a domestic satellite receiver-only earth station. This applies to all SMATV and private cable satellite antennas.

An optional license may be obtained from the FCC for one primary purpose: to allow the license holder to protest any future C-Band microwave installations which might cause interference at the TVRO location (terrestrial interference or TI). Obtaining a license requires frequency coordination services and a communications law firm should be used.

Programming fees are fees paid to the suppliers of satellite delivered programming by a cable system operator or by the owner/operator of various types of SMATV or private cable systems.

The reception of satellite delivered programming where the signals are distributed to multi-family or multi-unit facilities are considered by the program suppliers as commercial use of the programming and fees are expected to be paid just as with franchised cable system operators.

The fees vary depending on the service being offered and the number of subscribers, discounts for prepayment, advances and penetration of market.

The situation of programming fees when related to the SMATV/Private Cable industry has been volatile and ever changing. As the market has seen the number of private cable subscribers pass the 1,000,000 mark and with the assistance of reliable fee brokers and programming cooperatives, more suppliers are now willing to deal and rates are becoming realistic.

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$20,000...PROFIT ON YOUR NEXT
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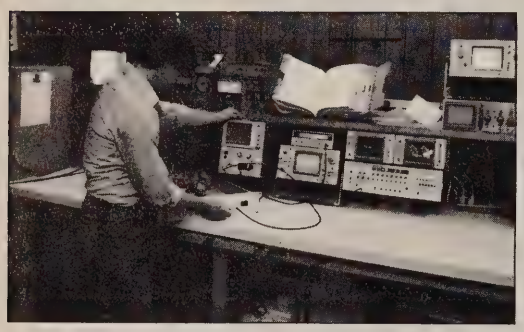
Astute Planning Puts Toner On Solid Footing

By William Gunn

During the "down-to-earth" period the CATV industry experienced after the pinnacle years it reached in 1982 and 1983, Bob Toner was changing. While most CATV distributors and manufacturers were still too busy counting their record profit margins to ponder the sudden slide the industry was reeling under, Toner was analyzing the situation . . . and doing something about it.

"You have to realize the peak of the CATV industry was in 1982 and 1983 and those years will never come back. We saw the industry changing and we saw the market place changing — so we changed. Of course, you never change soon enough, but I think we changed sooner than most. We didn't need a board of directors to decide that some changes had taken place. The market place was gone and we knew it was time to cut back."



Test equipment plays an important role in the research and design department at Toner.

Toner, president of Toner Cable Equipment, Inc., remembers those days well. Prior to the industry slump, Toner Cable employed 48 people at its Horsham, Pa., office. For the last year employment has stood at nearly half the number — 26. But the cutbacks haven't been as ominous as they may sound. While other companies have floundered and even failed because of production and employment levels still geared to the glory days of the industry, Toner has prospered.

"A lot of people in this industry have gone bankrupt. Some are there and don't know it, and some just need a little push and they're gone. We aren't because we saw what was coming and we responded."

Toner's facility in Horsham, Pa.

Now, you might call responding to changes like that foresight or just plain common sense — either way it's a good business move and it's been the way Toner has presided over his company since its founding in 1972.

Toner came into the business early. In 1971 he started selling multitap systems out of his home. Since that time, Toner Cable Equipment has grown each of its 15 years to the point it has reached today — a full line distributor of CATV products.

High-Tech Distributor

But don't refer to the company simply as a distributor, Toner balks at the notion. Toner says his company has evolved into a higher position. "What we did rather than just become a typical distributor who handles cables, hardware and all that — we stayed in the area of high technology. We feel that's where we're different. Specialized test equipment, prefabricated headends and we've installed and done a lot of engineering work on earth stations. We feel we do much better in the high technology area and we don't feel we really have any competition in this area."

Toner believes that distinction goes further than the inventory his company distributes. A distributor, he says, is more than just someone to buy equipment from — that's the reasoning behind Toner Cable's research and design department. "The only piece of equipment you'll see at most distributors in this industry is a fork lift, and that's really it. Come to us and you find four earth stations around the building. There is an engineering room with spectrum analyzers and all types of test equipment."

That equipment is utilized, in part,

for a key customer service Toner says is hard to find at other distributors. "We have an engineering design department where we design cable systems and private cable systems. Someone sends us a drawing of a facility, a building or a layout and we do the design for them."

The company developed another department in 1979 in response to a common problem in the industry — billing. "We started a computer department, and we have developed soft-ware for use in billing. There are an awful lot of cable companies out there reaching out to service bureaus. The bureaus are slow and the information is always 14 days old. You did it their way and that was the only way to do it. But now, we have over 190 computer systems installed across the country for CATV and private cable operators. We have our own staff of programmers and support people who do turn-key installations. We provide the hardware; we train the people and we service the software after that."

Specialized Equipment

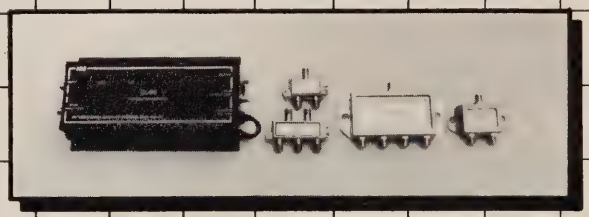
But Toner says it's not departments or computers that make the biggest difference — the answer is specialization. "We are distributors of specialized equipment. We maintain an inventory of some hardware and cable strictly as a service to our customers, but only a small amount. We have found the hardware area to be fiercely price competitive, the freight eats you alive. The only guy who makes any money off of it is the trucking company. We just choose not to go that way. We think the high-technology area is our place to shine. You can call other distributors and they have no engineers. Ask them a technical question and you won't hear an answer. Nobody knows how to turn on a spectrum analyzer, let alone use one. We have found that the independent operator, whether he be private or franchise cable, needs advice and help. We provide them with that as a natural part of our service."

Toner makes sure all of his employees, down to the last person, is well informed on every important aspect of the company's product line. When Toner acquires a new product line, the supplier is requested to come in and train the company staff. "We recently took on the M/A-Com commercial receiver and we had M/A-Com's product manager and their engineers come in here. They brought the equipment and went back into our engineering room with our sales engineers. They went through the entire product with our people showing them the features and everything. So, our people are very, very knowledgable."

Staying on top of technology has prepared Toner well for the possibilities of Ku-band. "We are ready for

ISS QUALITY BROUGHT NASA IN...

THE PRICE SOLD THEM



NASA's Weather Development Group needed to distribute vital weather information throughout their complex at the Kennedy Space Center. NASA turned to ISS to provide reliable modulators with a superior performance record.

ISS offers a complete line of high quality head end equipment. The **ISS GL-5000** Commercial Satellite Receiver has more features than units costing twice the price. The **ISS GL-2500** Adjacent Channel Modulator provides separate audio/video IF loop thru for use with all scrambling systems. The **ISS GL-2600** Frequency Agile Modulator gives you the versatility of selecting your own modulator frequency output for a fixed channel price. The **ISS GL-1600** Active Combiner gives you 16 inputs and one high level + 64 dB output. ISS complements its product line with the **GL-55** Distribution Amplifier, the **GLS-1500-4** and **GLS-1500-2** High Frequency Splitters.

International Satellite Systems
1004 Del Norte, Menlo Park, CA 94025
(415) 853-0833 Telex: 383524 ISS

800-227-6288

Circle No. 216 On Reader Service Card.

Ku-band. With the K-1 and K-2 going up by RCA, there are going to be a lot of people switching over. Also, it's going to alleviate a lot of terrestrial interference problems, and I think you'll see a lot of cable systems moving to Ku-band because of the T.I. situation.

"I believe there will be a profitable market as soon as they turn those satellites on up there. K-2 is up there now and it's being tested and as soon as it's turned on, you'll see the Ku-market moving right then and there. We will be ready for it. The receivers we're selling are Ku-switchable and anyone who would buy a receiver today that is not adaptable is making a foolish mistake."

Another 'Toner-strategy' is also paying off for the company. Toner says, unlike most distributors who have the experience and market knowledge Toner Cable does, his company focuses on attracting the small business — the small independant operators rather than the large MSOs. "We do serve the MSOs, the larger private cable operators, but the small independant operator is where most of our market is — that's where we do our best. We don't go after the big MSOs. It's fiercely competitive trying to sell them price-wise, and we do best where we can go with our full service. Quite often the people calling us need knowledge as well as equipment. We have found this to be true in the satellite world where there are a lot of companies with people who have been installing for individuals, and then suddenly they get their first commercial job which could be a hotel, motel or apartment complex. Their experience has been with a single installation. For those people we offer a lot of free advice."

In situations like the one he just described, Toner said the company can guide the novice step-by-step from offering free design and layout to giving advice on the distribution of the signal. A 1-800 number allows the company to offer the information free and Toner says the service pays off. "We'll take a call from anyone on our toll-free numbers. People call us and say, 'I got your name, and I'm going to build a system in an 18 apartment condo. I don't know what to do, can you help me?' And we do; we tell them what we think they should do. This person may or may not buy anything from us, but in most instances he does — and I think that this is something we have going for us."

And once Toner gets a customer — it's usually on a permanent basis. Toner says he's had the same customers buying from him for 15 years. "We got started with some of the first ones before the word 'private cable' was even coined. We started wiring apartment houses where there was no cable and now, it's grown into a big business. Long before satellites, we were selling specialized antenna rays in the Philadelphia area to bring in the two New York channels. So, long before anyone discovered the word private cable, we were making money at it."

Although Toner doesn't like to make predictions of any sort (he laughs he can't be sure what will happen on a day-to-day basis), he believes in the stability of the television reception industry. "I think we will see a turnaround in this industry. You have to look at it this way — we are in the business of entertainment and providing the equipment for entertainment. I don't care if the television picture gets there by laser, by fiberoptics, by cable or by direct broadcast — it's going to get here. And we will continue to keep our minds open to all transportation methods of television signals. When satellite technology first came around, we got into the home earth station business quickly . . . and now we're ready for Ku-band."

65-degree LNA and Polarizer

$99.95

in 10-lot orders
while they last

Kentucky Wholesale Satellite
Route 3
Caneyville, Kentucky 42721

502-879-8351

Circle No. 318 On Reader Service Card.

HBO

(Continued from page 112)

One of those distributors is Spectrodyne, Inc., Richardson, Texas, which has been providing TV programming to the lodging industry 10 years, and has been a licensed vendor of Home Box Office services four years. But Spectrodyne does not deal with apartment complexes, only hotels, according to Howard Buchanan, president.

Buchanan said Spectrodyne is already installing M/A-Com's commercial descrambler in hotels, and that although the exact cost of the descramblers is unavailable, "they cost too damn much, and you can quote me on that." Spectrodyne's entertainment systems are operational in 300,000 hotel rooms in 750 hotels in 200 cities in 45 states.

"We provide two services to the lodging industry," said Buchanan. "One is our pay-for-view movie system where we put all the equipment in, and if you, the hotel guest, want to watch a movie, it will cost you $5.75 per movie. We put the system in under a five-year contract with the hotel and we give the hotel a 10 percent commission on all the gross revenues generated in that particular hotel.

"The other service is what we call free-to-the-guest where we come in and install either a satellite dish or a microwave-receive system on the hotel property. With these we can provide at a charge to the hotel various premium programming such as HBO, ESPN, CBS, WTBS, etc., for a monthly fee per room to the hotel. That fee fluctuates, dpending on the size of the property and the mix of the premium programming they take.

An Open Letter To Owners Of Home Satellite Systems

Dear Home Satellite System Owner:

By now, most of you are aware that HBO® and Cinemax® satellite feeds are scrambled full time.

Unfortunately, along with the news of HBO's scrambling plans has come a flood of misinformation about these plans, as well as about the availability of HBO and Cinemax signals for home satellite system owners. Understandably, many of you have expressed concern over these issues. We would like to set the record straight on some of these issues so that you may have the information you need to make the choices you will be faced with when scrambling occurs.

First, why are we scrambling?

An increasing number of commercial enterprises — including hotels, motels, bars and apartment buildings — are picking up our signals without permission and without charge. This is a violation of the copyrights of artists and businesses with whom we have contractual agreements to provide programming. Signal scrambling is the best way to protect these copyrights. At HBO, we are careful to distinguish between the legitimate reception of our signals by individual satellite system owners and theft by commercial establishments who may be profiting from our signal. For this reason, we have established a plan to make HBO and Cinemax available to individual satellite system owners.

How can you continue to receive HBO and Cinemax after scrambling?

To continue to receive HBO and Cinemax, you can contact a TVRO dealer or local cable company to purchase a descrambler that uses the M/A-COM VideoCipher II™ technology. You can then purchase a monthly subscription for the programming services you wish to receive. You can do this by contacting a local cable company or, if you prefer, you may purchase a subscription directly from HBO. Please bear in mind that owning a descrambler box alone will not allow you to receive HBO and Cinemax. It simply gives you the capability of receiving unscrambled signals from a growing number of satellite programming services. After you subscribe to HBO and Cinemax, your descrambler will be activated to receive our services.

How much will it cost to subscribe to HBO and Cinemax?

You may subscribe to HBO and Cinemax through a local cable company or through HBO directly. If you subscribe through HBO directly, the monthly prices will be $12.95 for HBO, $12.95 for Cinemax, or $19.95 for the HBO/Cinemax Combo. These prices include our monthly program guide. Prices charged by local cable companies will vary from one company to another. We encourage home satellite system owners to check prices at their local cable companies before contacting HBO for a subscription.

We realize that this letter answers only some of the questions you may have about HBO's scrambling plans. If you would like more information, please call our Scrambling Hotline at (212) 302-6242 during business hours, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.—5 p.m., Eastern Time. Or, if you prefer, write us and receive *Questions and Answers About Scrambling*, our informational brochure for home satellite system owners. Address your inquiries to:

Home Box Office, Inc.
Direct Broadcast Department
1100 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036

We look forward to hearing from you.

HBO®
cinemax®

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Circle No. 344 On Reader Service Card.

TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

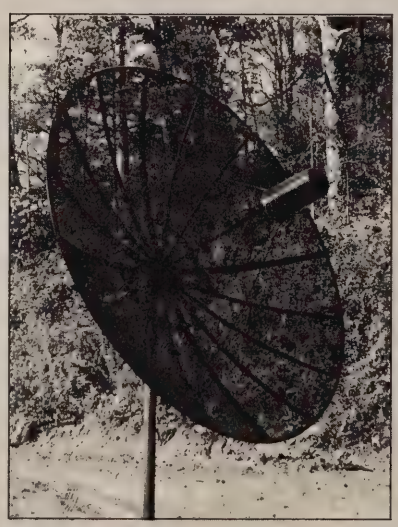
Portable Monitor From Leader

Leader Instruments offers a portable picture, waveform and audio monitor. The LVM-5863A is battery powered and provides a portable monitoring system that permits operational personnel to check performance of video cameras and recorders under most field conditions. For more information write Leader Instruments, 380 Oser Avenue, Happauge, NY 11788 or call (516)231-6900.

Circle No. 144 On Reader Service Card.

American Microcom's MicroMesh

American Microcom recently redesigned the MicroMesh 10. The new entry into the industry is the new all aluminum MicroMesh 10. This antenna comes in four matt black baked enamel panels. It comes equipped with actuator bearings on a ring mount, a quad-feed, or optional single pole feed and LNA cover. The MicroMesh has a f/d ratio of .38, a focal point of 46.5, and a 40.4 db gain. For more information write American Microcom Systems, P.O. Box 1006, Route 2, Georgetown Road, Cambridge, OH 43725 or call (614)439-7771.



Circle No. 245 On Reader Service Card.

Block Receiver From DX

DX Communications, recently introduced the new DSB-500 Receiver. The DSB-500 comes complete with a separate DX (DSB-60) Block Downconverter in the same carton. Featured on the DSB-500 is a convenient, illuminated DETENT "POSITUNE" TV-type channel selector, a built-in connection for descramblers, and C and Ku-band compatibility. For further information, contact DX Communications, Inc., 10 Skyline Drive, Hawthorne, NY 10532, (914) 347-4040.

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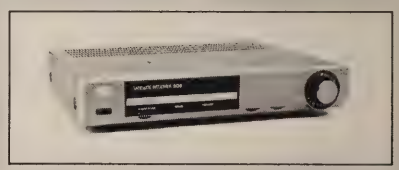

T-Mount's Roof Mount

T-Mount offers a roof mount for most satellite antennas. With adjustments for north, south, east and west the proper vertical adjustment can be found. This mount can support antennas up to 10′ in diameter and it accepts pipe up to 5½″. For more information write T Mount, P.O. Box 2585, East Peoria, IL 61611 or call (309)694-4135.,

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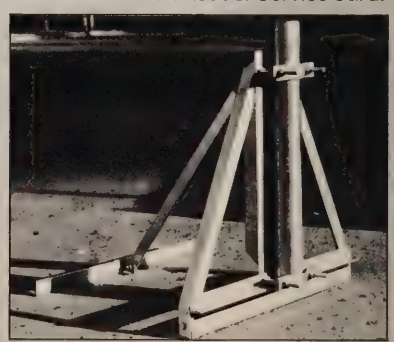
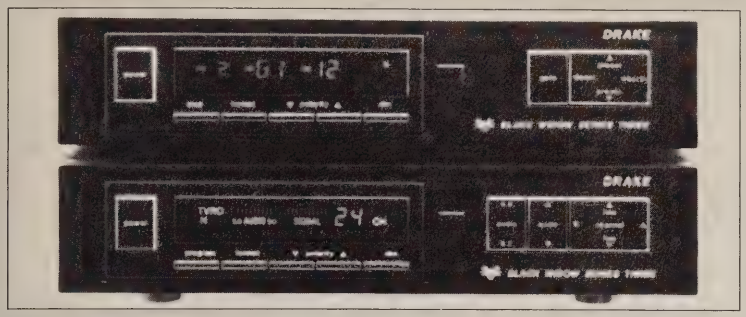


Drake's Black Widow Series III

Drake's Series III system comes with a 6-foot antenna with polar mount, antenna expansion panels, a deluxe block conversion receiver and 100 feet of connection cable. This system is the top-of-the-line in Drake's Black Widow Series. For more information write R.L. Drake, P.O. Box 112, Miamisburg, Ohio 45342 or call (513)866-2421.



Panasonic C-Band Low Noise Block Down Converters

The Panasonic Industrial Company, a division of Matsushita Electric Corporation of America, recently introduced two C-band low noise block down converters which provide quality satellite video reception on smaller antenna sizes.

Model CI-LNB-100 has a low noise specification of 100°K maximum, and model CI-LNB-85 has a low noise specification of 85°K maximum. Both converters utilize premium quality GaAs FET's in three stage RF amplifier configuration. The IF output frequency is 950-to-1450 MHz.

For more information contact Panasonic, One Panasonic Way, Secaucus, N.J., 07094.

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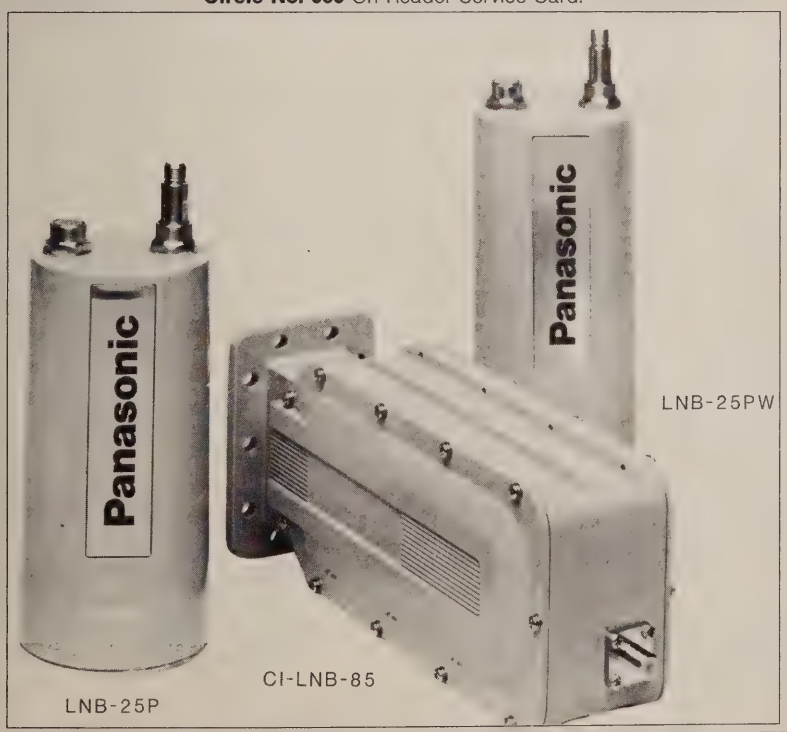

The Hurricane From ISM

International Specialty Manufacturing recently announced the availability of its Huricane 10.5-foot antenna. The Hurricane has been certified by the city of Corpus Christi, Texas as being able to withstand hurricane forces in excess of 200 mph. The antenna features a gain of 40.9 db and a g/t ratio of 20.1 dbk. It is also guaranteed for 2-degree spacing. For more information write ISM, 6662 SE Flavel St., Portland, OR 97206 or call (503)774-2584.

Circle No. 000 On Reader Service Card.

Delta's Starduster

The Starduster from Delta Satellite is a one piece, 8-foot, perforated aluminum antenna. It is equipped with a PM-1 polar mount. The PM-1 has full roller bearing action to track effortlessly through the satellite belt. For more information write Delta Satellite Corporation, One Echo Plaza, Cedarburg, WI 53012 or call (414)375-1000.

Circle No. 000 On Reader Service Card.

Koro's KR3000 Remote Control Receiver

The KR3000 utilizes block downconversion technology and full remote control operation. It can be used in single receiver systems or in multiple receiver systems. All receiver functions are controlled from the Remote Commander. For more information write Koro Communications, 5770 Royalmount Avenue, Montreal, Quebec H4P 1K5 or call (514) 738-1771.

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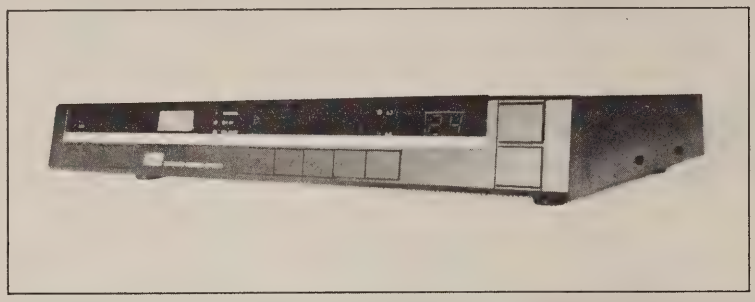

M/A Com's Mesh Antenna

M/A Com recently introduced a 10-foot mesh antenna. The antenna's feed system is M/A Com's UniPod which features fully enclosed components. Its worm-gear drive system is also sealed to prevent potential damage from dust, dirt and moisture. For more information write M/A Com Cable Home Group, P.O. Box 1729, Hickory, NC 28603, or call (704)324-2200.

Circle No. 296 On Reader Service Card.

Avcom's Waveguide To Coax Adaptor

The WCA-4 from Avcom adapts in waveguide transmission line to coaxial line and vice versa. The adapter functions in the 3.7 to 4.2 GHz range in either direction, waveguide to coax or coax to waveguide. The WCA-4 is made of solid aluminum and meets strict tolerances for optimum impedence match and low insertion loss. For more information write Avcom, 500 Southlake Blvd., Richmond, VA 23236 or call (804)794-2500.

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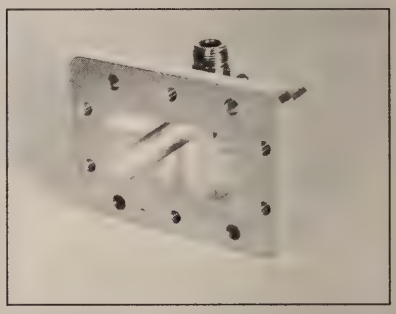

Stereo Decoder From Rhoades

Rhoades National recently announced the availability of its TE-800 universal stereo decoder. The TE-800 will decode MTS stereo from a TV earphone jack or a mono audio input on any TV or VCR. Other features include the stereo-plex synthesizer, and a MPX input so it can be used with newer stereo ready TVs and VCRs. For more information write Rhoades National Corporation, P.O. Box 1316, Dept. 603, Columbia, TN 38402 or call (615)381-9001.

Circle No. 297 On Reader Service Card.

Winegard Offers Posters

Winegard Company has made available to dealers two specially produced wall or window posters promoting the company's new Mini-Ceptor portable television receiving system. Each poster is 25″ × 38″, one is horizontal and the other is vertical. The posters are available through local distributors. For more information write Winegard, 3000 Kirkwood Street, Burlington, IA 52601.

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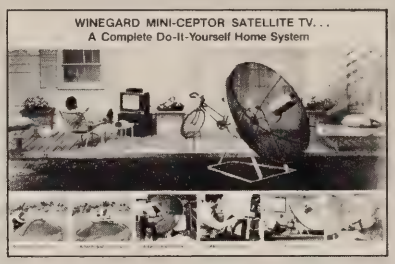

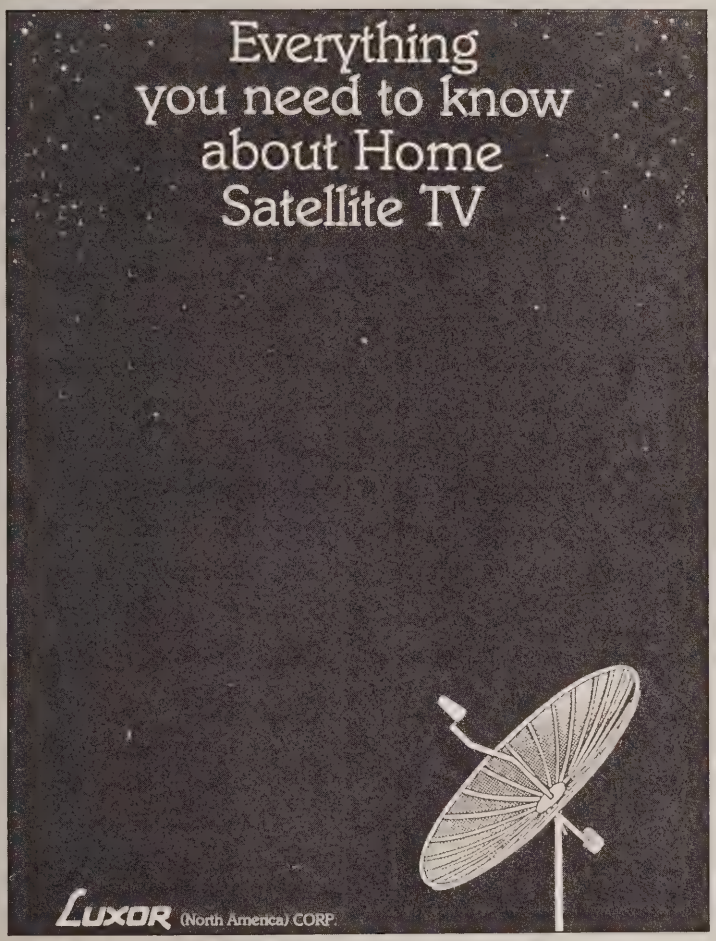

Luxor Offers Free Booklet

"Everything You Need To Know About Home Satellite TV" is the title of a new 16-page booklet available free to consumers from Luxor North America Corp. It answers 78 of the questions most frequently ask about satellite television. The question and answer booklet is organized into seven section under the headings: Getting Started, The Channels, "The Birds", Satellite TV Programming, The Dish, Satellite TV Receivers, and Tuning In. Individuals are invited to order a free copy and satellite TV system dealers can order quantities through their Luxor distributors. For more information write Luxor North America Corp., 600-108th Ave., NE, Bellevue, WA 98004 or call (800)245-9995.

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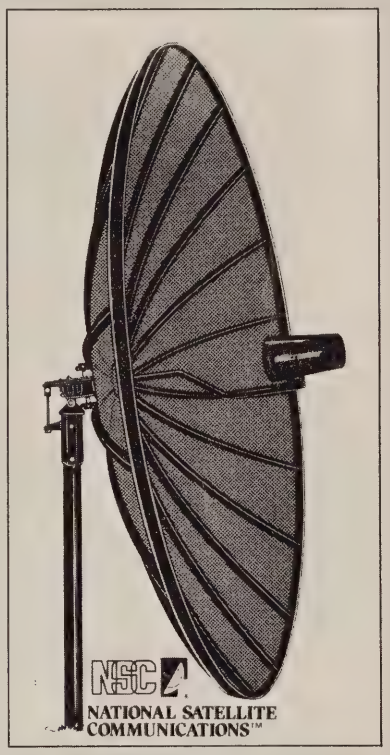

The DeScrambler From NSC

National Satellite Communications recently announced the availability of its new antenna, "The DeScrambler". The DeScrambler is UPS shippable in 3 boxes. Standard features include a snap together rim design, a pre-assembled, sealed motorized mount with a 36 volt motor attached and full domestic satellite ARC tracking capabilities. For more information write National Satellite Communications, 21st Century Park, Clifton Park, NY 12065 or call (518)383-2211.

Circle No. 299 On Reader Service Card.

ESP's Video Protection Guide

Electronic Specialists now offers a 40-page color catalog that describes power line problems such as noise and high voltage spikes. Typical system problems and suggested solutions are included. For more informaton write Electronic Specialists, Inc., 171 South Main St., Natick, MA 01760 or call (617)655-1532.

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HI-TECH EQUIPMENT PROTECTION & INTERFERENCE CONTROL CATALOG
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Business Machines • Home Tools
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Industrial • Scientific • Hospitals • Shops
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TOLL FREE ORDER DESK 1-800-225-4876
617-655-1532

Antennas From Rifle

Rifle Satellite Systems offers 74-foot and 10-foot fiberglass antennas. The antennas feature and accurate parabolic shape with a tuning bridge. For more information write Rifle Satellite, Rt. 1, Box 8, Paso Robles, CA 93446 or call (805)239-4230.

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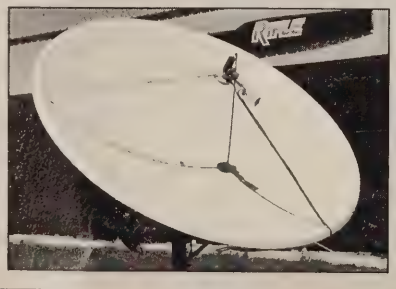

Chaparral's Accessory Line for Block Satellite Systems

Chaparral Communications recently introduced a complete line of block satellite receiver accessories for use in multireceiver and multi-feed satellite systems. Compatible with 950-1450 MHz block downconversion satellite receivers, Chaparral Block Accessories are designed for use in both home and commercial satellite systems. Housed in extruded aluminum, the Chaparral Block Accessories are compact, durable, and easy to install. Each accessory simply connects to the standard 75 ohm coaxial cable between the block downconverter, or LNB and the receiver. Initially, six components are included in the Chaparral Block Accessory Line:

Line Amp—This unit amplifies the signal from the LNB or block downconverter in systems where an extra-long cable run is required.

Two and Four-Way Splitters—These accessories divide the signal from the LNB or block downconverter.

V/H-4/12 Switches—These accessories select between the signals from two separate 4 or 12 GHz feeds on command from as many as four receivers, allowing independent selection of either polarity or feed by any receiver. The V/H-4/12 Switch is available in three models with one, two, or four outputs. Each switch is internally amplified for zero loss. For more information contact the Sales Department at Chaparral Communications, 2360 Bering Drive, San Jose, CA 95131, (408) 262-2536.

Circle No. 182 On Reader Service Card.

Thermoguard Heater From Boman

Boman Industries recently introduced its polarmatic servo motor with the built in Thermoguard Heater. This feature can help prevent frozen or sluggish operation. For more information write Boman Industries, 12160 Woodruff Avenue, Downey, CA 90241 or call (213)869-4041.

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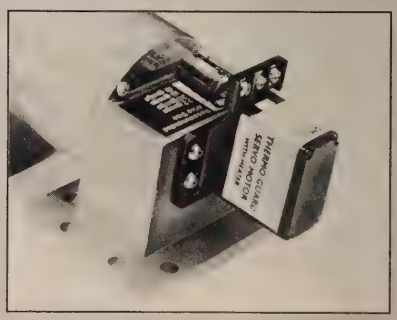

Installation Kit From Techkit

Techkit of Sunnyvale, Calif. recently introduced its Model 85A Portable Satellite Antenna Installation Set. The set is housed in a high impact carrying case and features a satellite receiver, a five inch TV, polarity control and 36 VDC actuator motor drive control. A satellite channel scan allows for hands-free tuning of all video. For more information write Techkits, 1111 West El Camino Real, Suite 141, Sunnyvale, CA 94087.

Circle No. 313 On Reader Service Card.

The True View From Lance

The True View is an 8-foot aluminum mesh antenna with a polar mount assembly. It can be equipped with dual feeds for use in SMATV installations. For more information write Lance Industries, 13001 Bradley Avenue, Sylmar, CA 91342 or call (818)367-1811.

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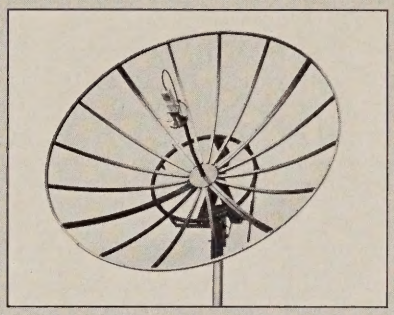

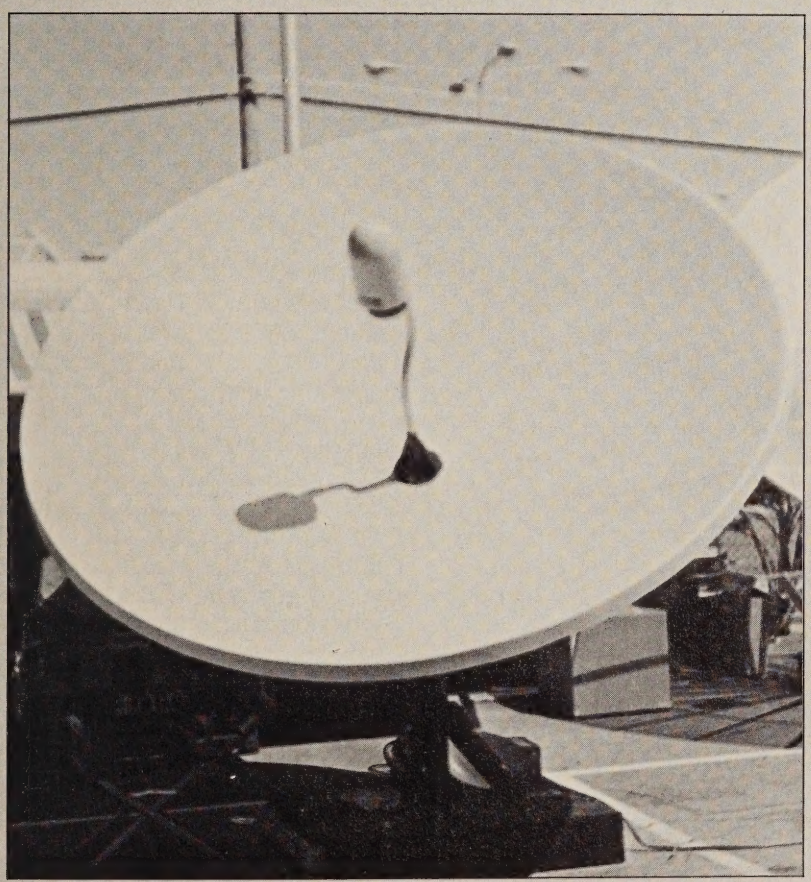

Odom's 10-Foot Fiberglass Antenna

Odom's 10-foot fiberglass antenna comes in one-or two-piece models. It offers quick, economical assembly and low cost shipping. For more information write Odom Antennas, Inc., P.O. Box 1017, Beebe, Ark., 72012 or call (501)882-6485.

Circle No. 177 On Reader Service Card.

Pico Products' Receiver

Pico Products of Liverpool, New York recently added a full-featured receiver to their line of TVRO products. The HR-100's features include audio/stereo selection and fine tuning, skew control, and an AFC system. The infrared remote performs all receiver functions including on/off, channel selection, volume control, audio/stereo control and satellite selection. The HR-100 is also descrambler compatible. For more information write Pico Products, Home Satellite Division, Products Information Department, 103 Commerce Street, Liverpool, NY 13088 or call (800)336-3363.

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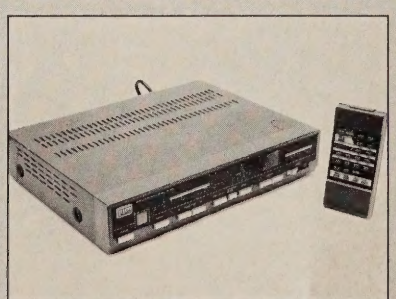

Business Perspective

(Continued from page 116)

ing budget. All of them — or simply one — may be needed to meet your advertising objectives. However you decide to plan your budget, you must make it *flexible,* capable of being adjusted to changes in the marketplace.

The duration of your planning and budgeting period depends upon the nature of your business. If you can use short budgeting periods, you'll find that your advertising can be more flexible and that you can change tactics to meet immediate trends. This is especially true in the ever-changing TVRO environment.

To ensure advertising flexibility, you should have a contingency fund to deal with special circumstances — such as the introduction of a new product, specials available in local media or unexpected competitive situations.

Your first budget will be the most difficult to develop — but it will be worth the effort. The budget will help you analyze the results of your advertising. By your next business year you'll have a more factual basis for budgeting than you did before. Your plans will become more effective with each budget you develop.

Reprinted from Small Business Administration Management Aids

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Echosphere Corp.: Because somebody has to go first.

Going first requires innovative thinking. Taking the risks to turn ideas into reality. Plotting the course for others to follow.

Echosphere Corporation has been the leader in TVRO since the industry's inception. Leadership which has made us the most respected distributor of home satellite products and services in the world. Leadership that is defining the course of the industry.

First with National Distribution

With Echosphere, you get the power of our national distribution network and the thorough understanding of your local market that you'll find at each regional facility.

First in Product Selection

We're a stocking distributor for over 60 manufacturers.

First with Same Day Shipping

Echosphere is the first truly national distributor. Our five locations—Knoxville, Dallas, Denver, Phoenix and Sacramento—allow us to provide normal delivery nationwide in only 48 hours.

First in Competitive Pricing

We buy in large volume and pass the savings on to you.

First in Product Knowledge

Our sales people are knowledgeable professionals, not order-takers.

First in Dealer Support

We provide excellent support with dealer financing, co-op advertising, technical service and dealer training seminars.

First Internationally

With Echosphere International, our commitment doesn't stop at the border.

First in Satellite Development

Antares, our 12 GHz satellite project means a bright future for our dealers.

Become Part of the First Team

The finest products, first-rate service, competitive prices and a commitment to excellence in all we do have made Echosphere the leader in the satellite television industry. Call us today and discover why working with the leader is the fast track to first place.

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